

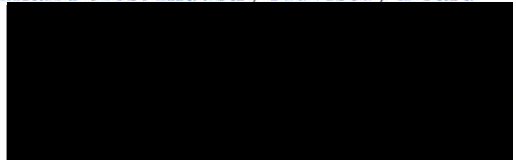
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22 SEP 2014

MIN. BIGNELL

Mr Trevor Smith
Chair

South Australian Forest Industry Advisory Board



19 September 2014

Hon Leon Bignell MP
Minister for Forests
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Dear Minister

RETAINING THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FOREST INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD

I am writing in response to the Premier's letter of 8 July 2014 inviting liaison with relevant Ministers or departmental contacts on the decision to abolish all boards and committees unless they have an essential purpose that cannot be met by other means, or on efficiency grounds or independence from Government.

Since its establishment in April 2013 the South Australian Forest Industry Advisory Board (SAFIAB) has met seven times and consulted with industry stakeholders in Mount Gambier, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra. As a result of this work, the Board has produced the "Blueprint for the Future - South Australian Forest and Wood Products Industry (2014-2040)" and Industry Policy Statement. This, I submit, is a remarkable and efficient achievement in such a short period of time.

The Forest and Wood Products Industry in South Australia has yet to form a completely representative body. The SAFIAB with its long-term vision of "*an innovative, internationally competitive plantation and wood products industry that contributes significantly to economic growth, social wellbeing and environmental sustainability*" is of the view that it is currently the best placed body to progress and monitor the initiatives proposed for industry and government partnership within the Blueprint and Industry Policy Statement. The alternative of calling ad hoc forums for each new initiative, is unlikely to be as efficient or deliver the desired results of long term international competitiveness, as no-one is usually held accountable for the actions generated.

Furthermore, the SAFIAB maintains a neutral overview of a cluster of industry sectors (or a cluster within a sector), in particular plantations, harvesting, wood and paper manufacturing which can provide valuable assistance throughout the conceptual stages of establishment. SAFIAB members have a diverse skill set and wide ranging interests, enabling it to form an independent view on matters across the whole industry spectrum both domestically and internationally.

The SAFIAB Terms of Reference include a review of the Board in May 2015 which would be an ideal time to consider the Board's future. In the meantime we would like to progress the following activities to continue the work envisaged in the Blueprint and Industry Policy Statement:

- facilitate an industry forum in the South East to progress the implementation of the major opportunities identified in the Blueprint,
- engage with the Victorian Government on cross-border issues,
- provide directions to deliver the required innovation to enhance the competitiveness of industry with flow-on benefits to livelihoods,
- assist to ensure Phase Two of the South East Forestry Partnership Program delivers on the VTT recommendations, and
- support the promotion of the Industry Policy Statement.

Accordingly the retention of the South Australian Forest Industry Advisory Board in our view will be worthwhile and our Terms of Reference could be amended as required should it be necessary.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss this with you further prior to you finalising your decision,

Yours sincerely



Trevor Smith
CHAIR

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FOREST INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD