

18 October 2019

## VicForests Continues Strong Financial Record in FY2018-19

VicForests continued to deliver a strong financial result with a net profit of \$1.953 million for the financial year 2018-19.

VicForests Chief Executive Officer, Nathan Trushell, said it was the strongest return in three years and was delivered despite challenging circumstances with reduced sales volumes and protracted and complex legal cases.

During the financial year, VicForests managed significant change implementing adaptive forest management practices in preparation for its Forest Stewardship Council® Controlled Wood standard audit in November 2019.

This involved extensive consultation with a broad range of stakeholders to develop new Harvesting and Regeneration and High Conservation Value Management Systems documents which guide the organisation-wide changes.

“Our new adaptive practices further enhance biodiversity and high conservation values. They identify and protect species habitat and endangered forest animals and plants, particularly the Greater Glider and the Leadbeater’s Possum,” Mr Trushell said.

VicForests implemented 12.6 hectares of harvest exclusion zones around the 126 Leadbeater Possum colonies detected during the year, bringing the total number of new colonies to 695 since targeted night surveys began in 2014.

VicForests diversified its operations planting around 250,000 eucalyptus blue gum seedlings on 250 hectares in the Latrobe region, supporting the State Government’s first move back into commercial plantations in 20 years.

Our strong focus on safety continues with incident and near miss reporting remaining at industry-leading levels during 2018-19, with staff submitting 179 reports and contractors 134 reports. There was one more Lost Time Injury (LTI) than last year, with the LTI frequency rate for contractors increasing marginally from 5.62 to 6.27 injuries per million hours worked.

“As one injury is one too many, we will continue to work towards achieving truly ‘zero harm’ in the workplace,” he said.

Mr Trushell said that while production of sawlog had decreased from previous years as VicForests transitions to lower ash species harvest levels, demand continued to be strong.

“The timber industry continues to make a significant contribution to the Victorian economy, based on a sustainable harvest cycle, the protection of biodiversity and forest High Conservation Values and

A photograph of a forest with tall trees and green foliage, partially obscured by a green geometric shape in the top right corner.

regrowing the forests for future generations. Our locally sourced products are much sought-after and are used in designer furniture and home building including feature floors, stairs and windows,” he said.

“VicForests is a credible, successful and dynamic native forestry business and we are focused on working towards continued strong results in the years to come,” Mr Trushell said.

VicForests’ annual results are audited each year by the Victorian Auditor General’s Office to verify their accuracy and compliance with Australian Accounting Standards.

VicForests 2018/19 Annual report is available to view [here](#)

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