

FACT SHEET

FOREST MANAGEMENT BILL 2013

This legislation provides for a transition in Forestry Tasmania's business model to ensure sustainability of the business into the long term. The Bill provides greater clarity of focus for Forestry Tasmania on its commercial functions and will provide the framework within which to reduce the significant deficit funding the business currently requires.

The core elements of the Bill are:

- It repeals the *Forestry Act 1920* but continues the Forestry Corporation (that is, Forestry Tasmania) and brings the governance and operational structure of the Forestry corporation fully under the *Government Business Enterprises Act 1995*.
 - The Bill contains savings and transitional provisions that ensure that interests in property now held by Forestry Tasmania, or any acts done by or with Forestry Tasmania or any legal proceedings involving Forestry Tasmania continue.
- It takes the land that is now "State forest" and, except for approximately 221,000 hectares of current forest reserves, confers legislative naming of that land as "permanent timber production zone land".
 - To avoid inconsistency with the *Tasmanian Forests Agreement Act 2013* (TFA Act), the Bill provides that any permanent timber production zone land that is now Future Reserve Land under the TFA Act must be managed in accordance with the TFA Act.
- It establishes the Forestry Corporation as the Forest Manager for the permanent timber production zone land.
 - The Forest Manager has the functions of managing and controlling the permanent timber production zone land and to undertake forest operations on that land. Additional functions can be granted to the Forest Manager by the Minister and the Treasurer.
 - The Forest Manager is responsible for making available from the permanent timber production zone land the minimum aggregate quantity of eucalypt veneer logs and sawlogs of 137,000 cubic meters to the veneer and sawmilling industries, consistent with the Tasmanian Forests Agreement.
- The approximately 221,000 hectares of forest reserves are declared to be either regional reserves or conservation areas under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. Responsibility for this land is transferred to the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIPWE).

- This land is separate from the land that is Future Reserve Land under the TFA Act.
- Employees of Forestry Tasmania, who within 3 months of resigning from Forestry Tasmania take up a position offered by DPIPW (to assist in the management of those forest reserves as either regional reserves or conservation areas), will have their years of service recognised for the purpose of long service leave in their new positions with DPIPW and any future redundancy program that might be offered under the State service. The superannuation entitlements of Forestry Tasmania employees who make this transition under these arrangements will not be affected.
- It establishes revised processes for Crown land to be declared permanent timber production zone land and for any land that is permanent timber production zone land to have that status revoked.
- The Bill preserves, protects and continues contractual arrangement and authorisation rights of people and organisations to access and use permanent timber production zone land for the range of purposes and activities they currently enjoy and undertake in what is now State Forest.
- The activities and pursuits that people are licensed or permitted to do in forest reserves, as well as contracts associated with those forest reserves, will continue when those lands are declared to be either regional reserves or conservation areas. However, those contracts or activities and any associated permits or licences or other authorisation would be managed by DPIPW in the future and not Forestry Tasmania.
- The Forest Manager will be able to control and restrict access to the land it manages in order to undertake its responsibilities by retaining the capacity to close forest roads and erect signs to regulate access to the permanent timber production zone land.
 - New powers will allow the Forest Manager to authorise persons who can request a person not to enter or to leave a forest road or permanent timber production zone land. These powers can be exercised in the interests of safety, or if those persons activities or conduct is preventing, or would prevent, the Forest Manager from performing its functions.
- The Bill contains provisions that were used in the *Forestry Act 1920* to assist Forestry Tasmania undertake the role of the Forest Manager. These include: the capacity to appoint timber classification officers and a set of requirements to manage, control the use of fire on permanent timber production zone land.
- The Bill continues to provide for the construction of and access to forest roads. In particular, all existing forest roads will continue to be forest roads under this Bill, including those forest roads that are in forest reserves that will become regional reserves or conservation areas.

- The ability to construct and maintain forest roads, by or for the Forest Manager, both in and outside permanent timber production zone land is provided for in this Bill.
 - The ability to construct and use new forest roads on land that is not permanent timber production zone land is necessary to enable the Forest Manager to access timber resources on permanent timber production zone land where such lands might be isolated from other parts of the production estate by non-production land.
- The Bill provides standard regulation making provisions with the legislation to be the responsibility of the Minister for Energy and Resources, supported by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources.