

Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry (Repeal) Bill 2011

FACT SHEET

The *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry (Repeal) Bill 2011* will repeal the *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry Act 1961*. Cabinet Decision ACD 737 (Matter AC 686) of 7 November 2011 approved the repeal of the Act.

The *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry Act 1961* was developed to specify the terms and conditions under which a pulp and paper mill would operate at Wesley Vale. The mill ceased operations in March 2010 and decommissioning and rehabilitation of the site have been underway since that time.

There is no foreseeable intent to locate a similar enterprise at the site, and even if this was to occur, it is anticipated any new development would be more appropriately governed by more recent legislation including the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*.

The closure and subsequent rehabilitation of the mill site means the *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry Act 1961* is redundant and can be repealed without consequence. In February 2011, the parent company of Tas Paper, the operator of the mill, endorsed the repeal of the Act.

Its repeal will also fulfil the Government's undertaking given to irrigators who have invested in the Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme. The Government committed to make legislative amendments to provide certainty on the allocation of water for the Scheme. As the rights to this water were previously held by Tas Paper, through the *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry Act 1961*, its repeal will ensure certainty on this matter.

Under the *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry Act 1961*, Tas Paper held rights to water as long as the industry was carried on. When operations at the mill ceased, these rights no longer existed, and the water previously held under these rights was allocated to Tasmanian Irrigation and irrigators on the Mersey River.

Notwithstanding the allocation of this water, some uncertainty remained while the *Wesley Vale Pulp and Paper Industry Act 1961* remained on the State's statutes.