

# Victorian Forestry Plan

The Victorian Government has developed the *Victorian Forestry Plan* to assist the industry as it manages its gradual transition away from native forest harvesting to a plantation-based industry.

Under the 30-year plan, a \$120 million package will help make sure workers, businesses and communities have the certainty and support they need.

This includes ensuring financial assistance, re-employment and re-training support, case management and wellbeing services are made available to any impacted workers.

More information about this support is available by calling 1800 318 182 or visiting [vic.gov.au/forestry](https://vic.gov.au/forestry)

## The Plan

Due to a reduction in available native timber resources as a result of fire and wildlife protection and changing consumer preferences, the industry is transitioning.

In order to make sure workers, businesses and communities have the certainty they need, the *Victorian Forestry Plan* includes a number of supports:

- **Timber supply** VicForests will ensure security of supply, meeting existing contractual obligations and negotiating new sawlog supply contracts for all mills to mid-2024. From mid-2024 to 2030 a competitive process will be used for timber allocation, with commercial native timber harvesting in state forests phased out by 2030.
- **Industry transition** All businesses, workers and communities will be supported to gradually transition out of native timber harvesting. A Consultative Committee with representatives from industry, VicForests, unions, local councils and government will be established to ensure the transition is managed fairly.
- **Support for businesses** Support for local businesses includes immediate financial assistance to prepare and plan their response to the transition. This includes assistance to retool in order to switch to plantation timber as well as financial compensation.
- **Strong communities** Investing in the continued strength of local communities, the package includes grants to grow and create local businesses and jobs, financial support for community projects and funding for local infrastructure.

## Support for workers

Workers and their families impacted by the transition will be supported with a dedicated assistance package. This includes:

- Training and re-training programs
- Case management and employment assistance
- Additional support through the Back to Work program
- Top-ups to redundancy payments.

# Victorian Forestry Plan Worker, Business and Community Support

Mills and Harvest and Haulage	Details including amount directly paid to operator	
<b>Business Transition Support Vouchers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to \$25,000 per business to engage appropriate professional services to develop a business response plan.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2019</b>
<b>Plant and Equipment Redundancy Payment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to \$250,000 per business for items that have not been fully depreciated and are unable to be sold.</li> <li>An independent valuation will be undertaken.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2024</b>
<b>Victorian Timber Innovation Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grants for innovation that supports their transition from native timber to plantation fibre and transformative industry investments.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2020</b>
<b>Mills only</b>		
<b>Mill Site Rehabilitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to \$75,000 for the safe retirement and repurposing of mill sites.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2024</b>
<b>Workers (Mill and Harvest and Haulage)</b>	Details including amount directly paid to worker	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2024</b>
<b>Top up of redundancy for worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The government will provide a top up ensuring that workers receive three weeks of pay for every year of service, capped at 80 weeks of pay (including employer contribution) and payment for unused sick leave, capped at 60 hours. The government's total top up is capped at \$23,000.</li> </ul>	
<b>Worker Transition Services and Coordination including Workers in Transition Scheme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordinated service delivery and case management of affected worker delivered at both regional and local levels.</li> <li>Includes registration, assessment and pro-active referral to training / retraining, employment and support services and linking worker to the pipeline of future employment opportunities.</li> <li>Information packs and seminars on available support and employment preparation – provided to affected worker in the workplace.</li> </ul>	
<b>Specialist career transition assistance (workshops and one on one sessions)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of career coaches and customised career transition plan.</li> </ul>	
<b>Dealing with change (workshops and one-on-one sessions for family members of impacted workers)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of support and tools to assist the family to adjust to the change.</li> </ul>	
<b>Training / Retraining</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to a suite of potential training (and training providers) aligned with worker needs and available employment opportunities including work-site skills assessment (for Recognised Prior Learning), pre-employment foundation courses (e.g. digital literacy, literacy, numeracy), skill sets modules / micro credentials, full VET qualification courses (which may be eligible for exemption to fees under Skills First), and pre-apprenticeship foundation training.</li> </ul>	
<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tailored mental health support.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABLE NOW</b>
<b>Relocation support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to \$20,000 per person.</li> <li>Off-setting costs of relocation to take up an ongoing job with flexibility to cover costs including rent, rental bond, connecting utilities, and removalist and travel costs.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2024</b>
<b>Expansion of Jobs Victoria services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensive employment support for disadvantaged jobseekers, including employment brokerage with potential employers and post placement support.</li> </ul>	
<b>Ex-forestry worker employer payment</b>		
<b>Back to Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment to employers for employing workers from the native timber industry.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$7,000 per person for the employer.</li> <li>\$4,000 where an employer provides accredited training to the ex-forestry employee.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Communities</b>	Details including amount (over 13 years)	<b>AVAILABLE FROM 2020</b>
<b>Local development strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$4 million in total.</li> <li>Economic diversification planning to support affected local economies' transition to new sustainable industries.</li> </ul>	
<b>Regional Growth Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$36 million in total.</li> <li>Actions from the local development strategies will be supported through the Regional Growth Fund including grants to grow businesses and create jobs in affected communities (particularly targeting job creation that is relevant for the location, timing and skills of affected native timber workers).</li> </ul>	

**To find out more about the  
support available for workers,  
businesses and communities**

**Call 1800 318 182**

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