

Media release | 20/10/2020

Industry welcomes Building Bonus extension

THE timber industry has welcomed the State Government's extension of the Building Bonus program.

The site works commencement period for homebuilders who qualify for the \$20,000 grant has been extended from six months to 12 months, which will help alleviate supply/demand pressure.

Building Bonus grants are available for eligible homebuyers who sign up by December 31, 2020, to build a new house or purchase a new property in a single-tier development prior to completion of construction.

As there were so many grant applicants when the program was first announced in July, there were concerns that construction delays and material supply issues would impact eligibility.

Sustainable WA timber is a popular choice in construction, being a renewable resource with many favourable characteristics, it is commonly used for house frames, roofs, cabinetry, doors, timber floors and decks.

Forest Industries Federation of WA (FIFWA) Executive Director Melissa Haslam said the announcement would help ease the pressure facing the industry and create more jobs, reinforcing the importance of WA's timber industry.

"We are pleased the State Government has listened to industry concerns and acted accordingly," Mrs Haslam said.

"Timber is in high demand as for many it continues to be the preferred material for construction, as recognised by Forestry Minister Dave Kelly through the State's Wood Encouragement Policy, adopted in 2019.

"The Policy encourages the use of responsibly sourced local timber in construction and fit-out of buildings in WA, highlighting the benefits of building with a natural, renewable and carbon-storing material. Minister Kelly has rightly outlined that building with wood is one of the best tools available for fighting climate change.

"This just emphasises what an important economic driver the timber industry is in WA, and what a key player it will continue to be in the State's economic recovery."

The WA timber industry contributes \$1.4 billion to the economy and creates about 6000 jobs, with more than 90% of those located in regional areas.

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About FIFWA

Forest Industries Federation WA (FIFWA) has been representing the interests of the Western Australian timber industry since 1895. The industry is a key driver of economic activity and jobs in Western Australia, contributing \$1.4

billion to the WA economy and creating about 6000 jobs in WA, with more than 90% of those in regional areas. The industry employs careful and comprehensive management policies to ensure WA's forests are sustainably managed. Less than 1% of the total forest area is harvested annually. In 2001 WA became the first state to abolish harvesting old-growth forests.