

FPA BOARD MEETING COMMUNIQUE

17 April 2020

The meeting was held by video-conference.

Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing and Covid-19 Pandemic

The monthly WHS&W report was noted. The Board were advised that most FPA staff were now working from home in accordance with government advice on social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic, having undertaken safety assessments of their home workstations. The FPA continues to be guided by regular updates and protocols being communicated by the Department of State Growth and Australian Government.

Members noted that forestry activity in the State appeared to be relatively unaffected by the pandemic, with FPA staff experiencing a normal level of enquiries and notifications for advice associated with industry operations.

Forest Practices Code Review

The Board noted that a minor change, to forest practices associated with swamps (including wetlands), had been made to the draft Code. The Code is being reviewed by an editor to prepare it for the consultation required by the Act of the relevant statutory bodies, the Forest Practices Advisory Council, Private Forests Tasmanian and the Forestry corporation.

Forest Practices Officer Code of Conduct

The Board reviewed a revised version the draft FPO Code of Conduct which incorporated the protocols for investigating an alleged contravention of the Code. The Board agreed a number of editorial changes to the Code.

Finance

The monthly financial report was noted. Members noted that the Government Grant for 2020/21 would not be received by the FPA until October 2020 (instead of July 2020). The FPA has sufficient funds to finance activities through to October.

Strategic Plan

The Board reviewed and adopted the FPA Board Strategic Plan 2020/21 to 2022/23, requesting that it be provided to the Minister for Resources and other stakeholders for information, and subsequently published on the FPA's website.

Private Timber Reserves (PTRs)

The Board agreed to recommend to Her Excellency the Governor the revocation of 15 full PTRs, and 2 partial PTRs covering a combined area of 2296ha.

Significant Scientific Publications by FPA Staff

Members congratulated FPA staff for the quality of work that has resulted in publication in leading scientific journals as follows:

B Burke, A Slee, PD McIntosh, H Hofmann and J Shulmeister 2020. A reactivated cave system induces rapidly developing cover-collapse sinkholes in Tasmania, Australia. *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*, 82.

SA Munks, AE Chuter and AJ Koch 2020. 'Off-reserve' management in practice: Contributing to conservation of biodiversity over 30 years of Tasmania's forest practices system. *Forest Ecology and Management*, 465.

Compliance

The Board reviewed the Compliance and Investigations Schedule.

The Board made a final determination to issue a prescribed fine for a breach of s. 17(4)(ba) of the Act. The breach involved the clearing of trees over approximately 4.5ha of land without a certified forest practices plan.

The Board made a preliminary determination to issue prescribed fines to two parties for alleged breaches of s.17(4)(ba), s.17(4)(b), and s.17(5) of the Act. The breaches involved the clearing of trees without a certified forest practices plan.

Appointment, authorisation, delegation of officers under the Forest Practices Act

The Board delegated authority under s. 43 of the Act to forest practices officers Matthew James Wood and Samuel Bruce Robertson.

Organisations operating in the agricultural sector and provision of information to landowners on the forest practices system

Members agreed that it would be appropriate for the CFPO to confer with organisations who advise proponents of agricultural developments on the requirements of the forest practices system in relation to the clearing of trees, and the willingness of the FPA to provide advice on the requirements when requested, to those organisations and/or proponents.

Next Meeting - scheduled for Friday 15th May 2020