

GOOD NEIGHBOUR CHARTER

**for Commercial Forestry
in Tasmania**

2008



GOOD NEIGHBOUR CHARTER

Preamble

This Charter has been developed by Tasmanian forestry companies in consultation with local government, regional authorities, farming and tourism groups. The Charter explains how we will communicate with our neighbours.

We seek to engage our neighbours in constructive and cooperative dialogue based on mutual trust and respect.

Commercial forestry is the harvesting and establishment of native forest and plantations. This may include the construction of roads and quarry operations.

All of our operations will meet or exceed the requirements of the Forest Practices Act and all other relevant legislation and state policies. The Forest Practices Code is administered by the Forest Practices Authority.

What you can expect from us?

We will ensure active, ongoing and timely communications with neighbouring landowners by:

- Informing the neighbours and key stakeholders of planned forest operations.
- Transparently explaining the detail of the Forest Practices Plan with interested neighbours following a reasonable request and with suitable notice. For legal reasons, information that may be commercial in confidence may not be disclosed.
- Consulting with neighbours and responding appropriately on issues of concern.
- Providing access to local field staff and managers of forest operations.

We encourage neighbours to communicate directly with field staff to obtain information, discuss concerns and work to resolve issues in a timely manner.

What is the planning process for a forestry operation?

- We are required under the Forest Practices Act to prepare a Forest Practices Plan detailing environmental requirements, the proposed harvesting techniques, reforestation plans, the conservation requirements and fire management strategies.
- The Forest Practices Authority (FPA) is an independent, statutory authority with responsibility under the Forest Practices Act to regulate forestry operations in Tasmania. The FPA employs a range of specialist staff to evaluate the natural and cultural values that are required to be managed under the Forest Practices Code.
- All Forest Practices Plans must be approved by a qualified and accredited Forest Practices Officer prior to the commencement of the operation and must be lodged with the Forest Practices Authority. Plans may be amended or refused. These Forest Practices Plans are randomly and independently audited by the Forest Practices Authority and all operations are required to have submitted a Certificate of Compliance by qualified Forest Practices Officers at the completion of each individual phase of operation.
- We will notify neighbours and key stakeholders prior to forestry operations occurring.



How will local government be involved?

- We will consult regularly with local government on issues such as zoning, transport routes, planning schemes and water intakes.
- We will consult with local government on three-year forward plans.
- We will inform local government of commercial forestry operations.
- We will provide local government with up-to-date contact lists of key industry people.
- We will work proactively and cooperatively to resolve issues of concern to local government.
- We will actively engage with local government through the Local Government Forestry Consultative Committee on strategic issues of importance to both parties.

How will we look after the environment?

We are committed to sustainable forest management (SFM) practices that are environmentally, economically and socially sound. We will manage Tasmania's natural and cultural heritage through the application of the Forest Practices Code, which includes specific provisions for:

- water quality and quantity;
- soil productivity;
- flora, fauna and genetic resources; and
- cultural heritage and geomorphology and landscape values.

How will we manage fire risk?

- We will undertake fire management planning at strategic, tactical and operational levels with the objectives of creating an environment suitable for the establishment of new forests and the reduction of logging slash with the aim of preventing fires starting and spreading from our forests.
- We will carry out strategic fuel reduction burning programs to reduce the risk of intense wildfires in our native forests.
- We will establish and maintain fire breaks, water supply points and access roads where necessary.
- We will provide and maintain fire-fighting equipment and trained fire-fighting crews where practicable and we will actively co-operate with other state and local fire management agencies.

How will we manage our planned burns?

- We will communicate our intention to conduct a burning operation to neighbours in accordance with state regulations.
- We will be considerate of neighbours' assets requiring protection.
- We will only conduct burning operations when forecast and actual weather conditions are suitable as assessed by competent persons.
- Burning operations will be planned and managed to minimise smoke near residences using all appropriate tools.
- The community is able to access daily information about the location of proposed prescribed burns and who to contact during the burning season via website link www.plannedburnstas.com.au



How will we protect tourism values?

- We are committed to the Tourism and Forestry Protocol Agreement.
- We will consult relevant accredited tourism operators and associations to minimise the impact of timber harvesting and transport .
- Burning will be managed to minimise the risk of adverse impact on significant tourism events or in major holiday periods such as Easter.

How will we keep our roads safe?

- We will ensure appropriate setbacks are applied to new forests adjacent to roads that are susceptible to frosts and ice.
- Transport routes will be carefully selected taking into account all safety issues.
- If appropriate, we will negotiate specific cartage hours and will apply speed restrictions in sensitive areas.
- We will regularly communicate safety information to our contractors.

How will we protect landscape values?

- We will consider reasonable requests from neighbours where new plantations are likely to impact on the immediate view from adjoining dwellings.
- Care will be taken when planning operational boundaries in sensitive landscapes in accordance with the requirements of the Forest Practices Code.
- Where practicable we will retain or establish native vegetation in strategic areas to lessen the visual impact of harvesting operations adjacent to established tourist routes.

Where will plantations be established?

- We will take account of neighbours' concerns when planning the development of new plantations.
- We will conduct negotiations with landowners for land purchase, lease or share-farm activities in an honest, commercial and ethical manner.
- We will make every reasonable effort to retain existing well-maintained dwellings on site. Where this is not practicable, we will actively facilitate relocation of dwellings.

How will we control weeds and pests?

- We will take account of neighbours' concerns when determining strategies to control weeds and animal pests, and co-operate with government agencies on regional weed and pest management strategies.
- We will only use approved weed and pest control measures in strict compliance with the Forest Practices Code and the Agriculture and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act and other relevant statutes and codes of practice.
- We will use chemicals consistent with best silvicultural, agricultural and environmental practice, with particular care in water supply catchments.



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How will we manage shading and boundary fences?

- We will consult neighbours about appropriate setbacks for plantations, on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration proximity to dwellings and the productive capacity of neighbouring land.
- We will equitably share the cost of establishment and maintenance of appropriate boundary fencing, as intended by the Boundary Fences Act.

How will we consider 'recreational values'?

- We understand and appreciate that some of our forests, whether they are plantations or native forest, are utilised for recreational activities by the community.
- We will communicate planned forestry operations with neighbours.
- We will inform neighbours of timeframes and expected outcomes of the forestry operation.

What options are available for neighbours to resolve their issues?

- If a neighbour has a concern, or even just a query, they should contact the local field staff whose names would have been provided during initial neighbour consultations.
- We pride ourselves in being responsive to neighbouring

landowners queries and concerns and we seek, as far as is reasonably possible, to ensure that issues are resolved at this local level. We will ensure your concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

- If you do not feel that the concern has been addressed in accordance with the Good Neighbour Charter then please contact the company conducting the forest operation through the phone numbers listed below.
- Enquiries may also be made to Private Forests Tasmania, local government offices or the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (FIAT). In the first instance, people should contact directly the company conducting the operation prior to raising concerns with other parties.
- If there is concern about possible breaches of the Forest Practices Code then these should be reported to the independent regulator, the Forest Practices Authority (FPA).

Contact details

Quote Good Neighbour Charter and locality so that you can be transferred to the appropriate designated manager.

Forestry Tasmania (FT) Ph 1800 367 378

Gunns Forest Products (Gunns Ltd) Ph (03) 6335 5201

Gunns Plantations (Gunns Ltd) Ph (03) 6394 5555

Norske Skog Ph (03) 6261 4055

Timberlands Pacific Pty Ltd Ph (03) 6345 3200

Forest Enterprises Australia (FEA) Ph (03) 6334 7811

Great Southern Plantations Pty Ltd (GSP) Ph (03) 6339 3581

Additional information

Neighbours may also contact the following, who may be able to provide additional information:

Forest Practices Authority (FPA) – Hobart Ph (03) 6233 7966

Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (FIAT) – Hobart Ph (03) 6224 1033

Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) – Launceston Ph (03) 6331 6377

Private Forests Tasmania (PFT) – Prospect Ph (03) 6336 5300

Signed in 2008 by:

Forestry Tasmania

Gunns Ltd

Norske Skog Boyer Mills Aust. Ltd

Timberlands Pacific Pty Ltd

Forest Enterprises Australia Pty Ltd

Great Southern Plantations Pty Ltd

Endorsed by:

Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (FIAT)

Forests & Forest Industry Council of Tasmania (FFIC)

Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA)

Tourism Industry Council Tasmania (TICT)

Tasmanian Forest Contractors Association (TFCA)

Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT)

Private Forests Tasmania (PFT)

The Forest Practices Authority commends the development of a Good Neighbour Charter as an expression of the commitment of forest managers to open and considerate engagement with their neighbours and local communities.

