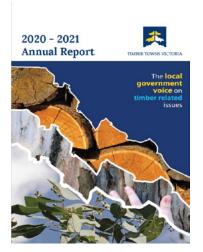


2022 23Annual Report

Previous Annual Reports can be found on our website





Postal: PO Box 152, Portland Vic 3305

Phone: 0428 891 728

Email: secretary@timbertownsvictoria.com.au Website: www.timbertownsvictoria.com.au



The local government voice on timber related issues

Contents

President's report
Executive Committee 6
Introduction
What we do8
Victorian Forestry Economic Contribution 9
Strategic directions
Timber Industry
TIRES
State government Election
Victorian Native Timber Ban 15
Membership16
Membership and Services
Treasurers Report
Timber Towns Victoria Presidents



























Presidents Report



I am delighted to present the 2022-2023 Timber Towns Victoria (TTV) Annual Report on behalf of our member Councils right across Victoria.

Victoria's forest and wood products sector is a significant contributor to the State economy and is critical to the economic wellbeing of several key local government areas. It provides jobs across Victoria in a range of sectors.

Given the significance of the timber sector to many communities across Victoria TTV commissioned a profile report detailing the break down of jobs across the different aspects of the timber industry enabling us to speak with creditability on the 'true factors' that were at risk.

Unfortunately, May 2023 the State Government's decision to ban native timber harvesting from 1st January 2024 replaced the original plan to phase out native timber harvesting by 2030.

This decision was seemingly brought forward earlier due to injunctions imposed and ongoing orders in the Supreme Court against
VicForests causing a cessation of all harvesting operations in all Forest
Management Areas across
Victoria in late 2022.



The Association has remained on constant alert throughout 2022 - 2023, keeping ears and eyes on forestry matters affecting local communities and local government areas.

A very challenging time for VicForests who had been trying extremely hard to source work for their forestry contractors and wood for their customers.

The Association has remained on constant alert throughout 2022 - 2023, keeping ears and eyes on forestry matters affecting local communities and local government areas. We continue to retain our presence and voice on several groups and committees including the Victorian Forestry Hubs, the Victorian Forest Plan Committee, and the Collaborative Communications Group, updating our members with information throughout the year as it comes to hand.

TTV welcomed new Council CEO's Brett Davis Moyne Shire Council in June 2022, Geoff Rollinson Gannawarra Shire Council in December 2022, and Paul Phelan Glenelg Shire Council January 2023, and we hope to continue to foster strong relationships with their member Councils.

We also farewelled member Council CEO's including Bill Millard from the Moyne Shire Council, Tom O'Reilly from the Gannawarra Shire Council and Greg Burgoyne from the Glenelg Shire Council, we thank them for their support.

The Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study (TIRES Report) 2023 – 2027 was completed in late 2022 continuing the long-term cooperation between regional municipalities, the forest industry, the Victorian State Government as well as several key stakeholders, to identify and assess critical road infrastructure, construction, and maintenance requirements, and establish funding priorities to ensure our rural and regional road network is fit for purpose and meets the needs of all road users.

The TIRES report 2023-2027 provides an evidence-based framework to prioritise infrastructure investment. There are clear benefits to the whole community in developing an appropriate road network for the forest industries – safety for all road users, regional job security, and improved access for other primary industries

During 2022, TTV finalised a new Strategic Plan 2022-2025 outlining the mission statement, key objectives, and key strategies in relation to government relations, transport and infrastructure, land use and planning, communications, and membership services.



The new plan will allow TTV to ensure our activities are in line with our mission, to be the local government voice on timber related matters and their impact on local communities and local government infrastructure.

TTV will continue to refer to the key objectives and key strategies in the 2022 – 2025 Strategic plan; and advocate on issues affecting the timber sector that impact on our member councils.

To executive members Cr Rob Vance & Cr Tom Sullivan and committee members I sincerely thank you once again for your commitment and team collaboration throughout the year.

On behalf of the committee, I once again extend our sincere appreciation to Rachael Healy for the hard work behind the scenes that does not go unnoticed.

Yours sincerely,

Cr Karen Stephens

Karafter



Executive Committee



President and Chair Cr Karen Stephens



Vice President Cr Robert Vance



Treasurer
Cr Tom Sullivan



Executive Member Cr Chris Potter



Executive Member Cr Michael Leaney



Executive Member Cr Sharon Gibson



Executive Member Greg Burgoyne



Executive Member Mark Coleman



Executive Member Paul Phelan

Introduction

TTV provides an important service to member councils which includes the increased ability to liaise with the state and federal government, an important information service and the value of being involved with a state-wide network.

Recognised as the peak local government body on forestry, TTV provides policy advice on various forestry policy and planning matters. TTV has links with similar associations in other states and other groups within Victoria to increase local governments capacity to be effectively involved in the forestry policy setting at both the state and national.

General meetings of the Association are held bimonthly where actions are recorded and detailed work proceeds between meetings.

Our Mission

Timber Towns Victoria (TTV) is the local government voice on timber related matters and their impact on local communities and local government infrastructure.

Our History

'The history of Timber Towns Victoria is much like the forest from where the association evolved. As a tree is affected by the soil in which it grows and its surrounding climate, Timber Towns Victoria has been affected by many factors over the years. The association has been influenced by those who make a living from the forest, local and state government legislation, state department decision makers and environmentalists.' – Taylor, J. 2015. *Let Sanity Prevail: the history of Timber Towns Victoria*. Billycan Press, Camberwell Victoria.

Timber Towns Victoria was formed to represent the interests of municipal councils in relation to forestry on both public and private land. Still to this day, the association's primary function is to provide a forum for local government to address the management of forests and forest industries and their impact on local communities.



Our Objectives

- To deliver leadership and advocacy for the interests of local government and their communities, particularly road and bridge infrastructure.
- To provide a forum for local government to share information and to address timber related issues.

Key Policy Areas

The forest industry continues to shift over time with changes to government policies and industry practices. As such Timber Towns Victoria needs to adapt and vary priorities over time reflecting the changing nature of forest industry. Several key long-term challenges face the local government sector in relation to the management of forests on both public and private land.

These include the:

- provision, maintenance, and funding of infrastructure required for timber haulage
- long term social and economic viability of communities reliant on forest related industries and the impact of policy change on such communities.
- valuation and rating of private and leased land used for commercial timber production
- fulfilment of legislative responsibilities for ensuring compliance with forestry regulations on private land
- planning control of plantation expansion to ensure balanced and appropriate land use and adequate fire prevention.
- responsibility as representatives of diverse communities, to ensure that Victorian forests on public and private land are managed sustainably for the long-term benefit of all forest users

- To be a credible and respected stakeholder on timber issues, representing local government in working with the community, all levels of governments and the timber industry.
- To support and assist councils managing the impact of timber related issues.
- To support sustainable communities and local government infrastructure.



Victorian Forestry Economic Contribution





Strategic direction

Addressed in 2022 - 2023

Government Relations

Timber Towns Victoria continues to maintain relationships with government representatives in relation to timber matters with both the State and Federal Governments.

Timber Towns Victoria President Cr Karen Stephens continues to hold representation on the Victorian Forestry Plan Advisory Committee since December 2021.

Timber Towns Victoria made submissions to the following subjects in the 2022 / 2023 membership year:

- 2022 Proposed Variation of the Code of Practice for Timber Production
- Conservation, Forests & Lands Amendment Bill 2022
- Future uses of the forests in the Strathbogie Ranges and Mirboo North Immediate Protection Areas

Other interactions with Government

During the 2022 / 2023 membership year, Timber Towns Victoria corresponded with Members of Parliament on a range of subjects but not limited to the following.

June 2022 TTV received correspondence from the Hon. Peter Walsh regarding the Sustainable Forests Timber Amendment (Timber Harvesting Safety Zones) Bill 2022 submission made by TTV July 2022 TTV wrote to Senator the Hon. Murray Watt congratulating him on his new portfolio of Minister Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry expressing that TTV looks forward to working with the minister to achieve positive outcomes for the timber sector.

August 2022 TTV responded to Senator the Hon. Murray Watt and shared a copy of TTV Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 and the Timber Towns Victoria Annual Report 2021 – 2022

August 2022 TTV wrote to the President of the Shire of Manjimup in Western Australia, Paul Omodei, expressing support and communication around the Native Forestry Industry announcements.

August 2022 TTV wrote to members of Parliament sending a copy of the Timber Towns Victoria



2022 Annual Report and highlighting the newly adopted Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025

October 2022 TTV received correspondence from Senator the Hon. Jonno Duniam thanking Cr Karen Stephens for sending on TTVs annual report and reiterating his support for the forestry industry.

May 2023 TTV liaised with The Hon Melissa Horne MP's office (Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports and Freight) to finalise the Minister's Foreword within the TIRES Executive Summary to be published with a media release.

Transport and Infrastructure

Timber Towns Victoria was successfully granted funding through the Victorian Department of Transport to assist in creating a Timber Industry Roads Evaluation Study (TIRES) report for the roads which lie within the member councils. The report completed in late 2022 can be utilised by member councils as a tool when seeking funding to highlight areas requiring upgrades to the road transport infrastructure that supports the timber industry across Victoria.

Land Use Management

The Victorian Regional Forest Agreements Major Event Review of the 2019-2020 bushfires was completed and released to the public in March 2022. TTV was consulted with and invited to participate in the review in 2021.

TTV Communications

Timber Towns Victoria actively increases awareness of Timber Towns Victoria and timber related matters concerning communities and infrastructure through a number of different avenues including:

- Maintaining an active social media presence on Facebook and Twitter.
- Updating the Timber Towns Victoria website with relevant news and informative documents
- Through media releases to the broader Victorian media 2022 – 2023:
 - Timber Towns Victoria 2022 Election Campaign
 - Job Losses Rippling Through Victorian Communities
 - Plantation Promises Where are they?
 - Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study





Timber industry Specialised analysis report

This report presents an overview of the Timber Industry in the regions and shires that are part of Timber Towns Victoria (TTV). In terms of this report, the Timber Industry directly relates mainly to industries that incorporate the management of forests or the transformation and sale of forestry related products. The following industries are incorporated in direct estimates:

- Forestry and Logging
- Forestry and Logging Support Services
- **Wood Product Manufacturing**
- Pulp, Paper and Paper Product Manufacturing
- Timber Product Wholesaling.

This report presents key economic data for the industry as well as workforce characteristics. The estimated impacts resulting from the planned ban on harvesting in native forests is also explored.

Key highlights from the report:

informed decisions

2021

- In 2019/20, the industry was estimated to directly support almost 6,000 jobs or 2.3% of all jobs in the combined TTV areas.
- In 2019/20, the industry generated \$1.4B in sales /output of which \$432M was direct value added.

- The estimated contribution of native forests to logging, processing and other timber-related activities in the TTV areas has been modelled. It is approximate to a situation where native logging ceased immediately.
- The impacts resulting from the State Government decision to cease logging in native forests is more likely to fall on the local government areas to the east of Melbourne which are home to the large majority of native forests that are allowed to be logged.
- It is acknowledged there are a number of issues that need to be considered with the transition to zero native forest logging. These include potential undersupply of plantation timber; a rise in imports (especially appearance grade timber) which have a higher carbon footprint and may come from forests where industry does not follow sustainable practices; loss of fire management expertise; and a loss of specialised manufacturing skills and equipment.



TIRES

The Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study (TIRES) is a study of road management strategies and investment for timber industry roads in Victoria. The Victorian timber industry is a substantial contributor to the state's regional and overall economies and is widely dispersed across the state, placing significant demands on Victorian road and bridge infrastructure.

TIMBER INDUSTRY ROAD
EVALUATION STUDY
2023-2027
Executive Summary

This TIRES report was prepared by Greenwood Strategy Solutions Pty Ltd

www.greenwoodstrategy.com.au

GREENWOOD
TIRES

TIRES

TIRES

CREENWOOD
TIRES

TI

Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study

The full report is available to Timber
Towns Victoria members. The executive
summary to the report is available at
www.timbertownsvictoria.com.au

The TIRES Report identifies the local road infrastructure required for the efficient operation of the Victorian forest industry, focusing on the first mile; the local roads utilised at the beginning of each timber run, currently unmaintained by state funding.

The current TIRES report 2023 – 2027 has just been completed and launched to TTV members in 2023 as a tool to assist in applying for government road funding where the timber industry has affected local roads.

'The commitment to economic expansion in key forestry regions is welcomed and Timber Towns Victoria looks forward to continuing to work constructively with the forestry sector to ensure that industry growth and infrastructure management are properly coordinated to ensure safe and secure access for all road users.

The TIRES report 2023-2027 provides an evidence-based framework to prioritise infrastructure investment and I encourage you to review the document.'

- Cr. Karen Stephens, Glenelg Shire Council President, Timber Towns Victoria.



'I want to commend Timber Towns Victoria for its work in the production of this study.

It's another great example of collaboration between state and local governments.

It will help deliver better outcomes for the safe and efficient transportation of timber products in coming years, ultimately supporting jobs and the state's economy.'

- The Hon Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Minister for Ports and Freight.



2022 State Government Election Campaign



Timber Towns Victoria is the peak local government body for Victoria on forestry policy. We represent Victorian Local Government areas with forestry industries on public or

We call on the State Government to rethink its decision to phase out the native timber industry. We need a genuine plan to guarantee adequate timber supply, protect regional economies and lobs, and recycle perfairly for native timber communities across Victoria.

The current situation

 Neventher 2019, the Victorian Labor Government announced its Forest Plan to phase out native forest opging by 2000. Marvest levels will be mainlined at current levels to 2024, then reduced by around 29% in 205, and a further 25% from 2026 to 2030. The Government's policy is to transition the remaining native ovest timber industry to plantation timber.

long g 1 or minion is omeres as a transform passage for the amount of victoria, a recent operation shows the industry is worth \$311 million per annum across two eastern shires in Wellington and I Gippaland alone.

Phasing out the native timber industry will devastate jobs and regional economies. Regional communities have been severely impacted by drought, buildines, the loss of the 2019-20 sourism season, and now the pandernic. Oppoland is one of the hardest hit areas in Australia in 2020 with necessary dealthing in last side months.

The loss of native timber industry jobs will have devastating flow-on impacts in small regional communities where there are limited alternative employment opportunities, low chance of re-skilling, and when 35% of log sammilling and timber dessing workers are the sole income earner for their household. When flowned either industrial for an inter timber endess who will be an interesting the chance and to be failed understand of the miner timber endess who will be substituted.

This is not the time for Government to take steps that will cost more jobs, further damage regional communities and economies, and sacrifice a viable resource industry.

The native timber industry is critical in the fight against climate change. The intergovernmental Fasel on Climate Change Sinh Assessment Report states that sustainable foreir management can increase and maintain forest carbon sinks through harvest, transfer of carbon to wood

The native timber industry thus provides a climate solution. The industry also improves fore regenerating forest areas badly damaged or killed by high-intensity bushfires.





















The State Government's native timber phase out continued to cause angst within the affected Victorian communities including native timber workers, haulage & harvest contractors, mill owners and workers due to ongoing court injunctions, and the Victorian Government's policy decision to shut down the industry by 2030.

During the past 12 months, TTV has not only advocated in support of the industry through positive communications and messaging on social media, but the Association also created a 2022 State Government Election Campaign. This campaign sent a strong message to voters and the policy makers to call on the State Government to rethink its decision to phase out the native timber industry asking for a genuine plan to guarantee adequate timber supply, protect regional economies and jobs, and provide certainty for native timber communities across Victoria. This was communicated through a campaign flier and several paid Facebook adverts targeting voters.

The TTV Facebook campaign reached more than 51,000 people and received more than 5,600 post engagements that includes, commenting, sharing, viewing photos / videos or clicking on links within the ads.

Although it was TTV's first type of paid campaign through Facebook, it was seen as a success by the committee for raising the awareness of the regenerative native timber industry in Victoria and the major issues to communities and the supply chain that have been caused by the plan to halt native timber harvesting.

Victorian Native Timber Ban - End of an era

In November 2019, the Victorian State Government announced the phase out of the native timber industry in Victoria commencing in 2024 to end by 2030. Fast forward less than four years, and in May 2023 the same government announced the ban to be brought forward by 6 years meaning that all native timber harvesting is to end in Victoria on 1 January 2024.

Timber Towns Victoria will continue to work with members and the state government on this issue to help pave a way forward addressing the following:

- Adequate finance support is provided to contractors and sawmills as they transition out of native timber production.
- Communities are supported ongoing due to the government decision
- Victoria has an adequate future timber supply

- The remaining timber industry in Victoria is preserved and enhanced
- The industry helps tackle the housing crisis and economic cost of living crisis
- Strategies are developed to sure up plantations
- Ensure plantations planned for future harvest have harvesting certainty locked into the planning process
- Industry skills and expertise are not lost in time for when future plantation harvesting occurs

Timber Towns Victoria is developing a 'Position Paper' on the Victorian timber industry moving forward and will be available on the website at www.timbertownsvictoria.com.au from 1st September 2023.



Membership

Membership of the association is open to all Victorian municipalities where forest industries are recognised as significant contributors to the economy and community.

Forest based industries and other interest groups are not represented by the Association. Each member council may nominate two representatives to attend meetings, one of whom must be an elected councillor.

Administration of TTV is vested in the Executive Committee. A President, Vice President and Treasurer are appointed annually, and the Association is supported by a part-time administration support officer.

This year TTV represented twelve member councils across the state. These are grouped below according to the Victorian regions, and in a map on Victoria containing Municipal Council Boundaries.

Gippsland	Central	South West	North
Baw Baw Shire Council	Colac Otway Shire Council	Glenelg Shire Council	Gannawarra Shire Council
East Gippsland Shire Council	Golden Plains Shire Council	Moyne Shire Council	
Latrobe City Council	Moorabool Shire Council		
Wellington Shire Council	Pyrenees Shire Council		
	Ballarat City Council		



TTV Membership and Services

Timber Towns Victoria delivers information and updates, to members keeping members informed on industry issues and activities. Throughout the year invited guests attended and/or made presentations at TTV meetings, including:

- Dr Alastair Woodard Director TPC Solutions (Aust) Pty Ltd (Spoke about the Gippsland Forest Dialogue)
- Pat Groenhout Managing Director Greenwood Strategy (Spoke about the TIRES report)

TTV delivers an important communication service to its member councils, providing regular information about forestry policy and management initiatives. The association communicates directly with member councils through delegated representatives, with circulated media releases, submissions, through the association's Facebook and a resource portfolio on our website.

TTV facilitates the sharing of knowledge, experience, and information between its members through regular meetings of representatives and other communication channels.

Timber Towns Victoria encourages members to actively participate and provide feedback / comments to documents such as the creation

of government submissions, the periodic reviews of the Strategic Plan the adoptions and implementation of a Timber Encouragement Policy for their Council.

Members have access to a member only area of the associations website where sensitive documents can be viewed with a members log in. The TTV website is: www.timbertownsvictoria. com.au

Timber Towns Victoria offers presentations on TTV to member councils on request where there is a desire to gain a broad overview on TTV functions and current activities.

In February 2023, Timber Towns President Cr Karen Stephens gave a presentation to Colac Otway Shire Council providing an overview of TTV and then undertook a tour of the local timber mill AKD with Colac Otway Councillors and Officers.

TTV is a voice for the members to be heard on current timber industry related issues that are affecting them. TTV listens to what is happening on the ground from our members, and advocate to the State and Federal Governments on behalf of our members for their best interest and desired outcomes.





Treasurer's Report

TIMBER TOWNS ASSOCIATION INC.

STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD 1ST JULY 2022 TO 30Th JUNE 2023



\$34,074.43

-	DD	DI	α	\mathbf{a}
/		RE	1 1 14 1	

ATO BAS Refund	4,108.00	
Subscriptions	17,500.00	
Transfer from Sandhurst Select Mortgage Fund	15,000.00	
GST Collected	1,750.00	38,358.00
		\$72.432.43

LESS PAYMENTS

GST Paid	6,247.09	
Bank Fees	18.26	
Printing & Stationery	1,721.73	
Subscriptions	50.00	
Audit & Accounting	1,350.00	
Education &Training	100.00	
ATO Fees	858.00	
Website Costs	509.86	
Secretarial Fees	19,629.58	
Consumer Affairs Fee	61.20	
Advertising	2,140.46	
Consultancy Fees	38,059.09	70,745.27

CASH BOOK BALANCE AT 30TH JUNE 2023

Transaction Account Bank Statement Balance at 30th June 2023 1,648.36
Credit Card Account Bank Statement Balance at 30th June 2023 38.80 \$1,687.16

BANK STATEMENT AS CASH BOOK AT 30TH JUNE 2023

\$1,687.16

\$1,687.16

NOTES

FORMING PART OF THE STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD 1ST JULY 2022 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

SUBSCRIPTIONS

TOTAL	\$19,250.00
Latrobe City Council	2,750.00
Pyrenees Shire	2,750.00
Baw Baw Shire	2,750.00
Golden Plains	2,750.00
Ballarat City Council	2,750.00
Moyne Shire Council	2,750.00
Wellington Shire	2,750.00

STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE SANDHURST SELECT MORTGAGE FUND FOR THE PERIOD 1ST JULY 2022 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

SANDHURST ACCOUNT BALANCE

AT 1ST JULY 2022		\$124,139.62
ADD RECEIPTS Interest Received	3,625.04	3,625.04 127,764.66
LESS PAYMENTS Timber Towns Commonwealth Business Transaction Account 15	5,000.00	15,000.00
SANDHURST ACCOUNT BALANCE AT 30TH JUNE 2023		\$112,764.66

I recommend Timber Towns Victoria members receive this report.

Cr Tom Sullivan

Treasurer

Timber Towns Victoria



Timber Towns Victoria Presidents

Start	Finish	Name	Shire
1984	1987	Brenda Murray	Shire of Orbost
1987	1988	Alan Billing	Shire of Colac
1989	1990	Paul Gilmore	Shire of Alexandra
1990	1990	Kevin Smith	Shire of Myrtleford
1990	1990	Paul Gilmore	Shire of Alexandra
1993	1994	Jim Ure	Mitchell Shire
1994		Amalgamation	
1995		Amalgamation	
1996	1998	Jim Ure	Mitchell Shire
1999	2000	Noel Harvey	Macedon Ranges Shire
2000	2003	Bob Orr	Hepburn Shire
2003	2003	Jenny Blake	Golden Plains Shire
2003	2010	Malcolm Hole	Wellington Shire
2011	2012	Bill Harrington	Baw Baw Shire
2012	2016	Jan Vonarx	Alpine Shire
2017	Current	Karen Stephens	Glenelg Shire







ABN: 13 358 698 037 PO Box 152, Portland Vic 3305

T: 0428 891 728 | E: secretary@timbertownsvictoria.com.au

www.timbertownsvictoria.com.au