

## Comprehensive survey provides accurate figures on forest industry jobs and spending in Western Australia

A new report released today by the Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry provides the Western Australian community with more accurate information about the forest industry than was previously available.

The report, *Forestry, jobs and spending: forest industry employment and expenditure in Western Australia, 2005-06*, provides a detailed picture of the WA forest industry, including the number and types of businesses in the industry, and the employment and spending generated by the industry.

Author Dr Jacki Schirmer today said that the report provides a comprehensive understanding of where forestry jobs are located in WA and the types of employment generated by the industry.

“Figures given in the report are based on a comprehensive survey of the industry, which for the first time included the many small contracting businesses that undertake a considerable amount of work in forestry in WA,” said Dr Schirmer.

**Dr Schirmer will present these findings at public seminars in Albany (Monday 17 November, at 1.30pm) and Bunbury (Tuesday 18 November, at 2.00pm).**

The report is the result of a survey of Western Australia’s forestry businesses which will be repeated later this year and again in 2010.

### Key findings of the report include that:

- Total expenditure by the WA forest industry in 2005-06 was between \$790-1060 million.
- The WA forestry industry in 2006 involved more than 300 businesses, including over 70 forest growers and processing businesses, and over 230 businesses involved in contracting work for the industry.
- 5,570 people were employed in the WA forest industry in 2005-06. This equated to 5,090 full-time equivalent employees when part-time and casual employment was taken into account. This represented 0.65% of WA’s employed labour force in August 2006.
- An estimated 50% of forestry workers rely on native forest resources, while 22% work in the hardwood plantation sector and 28% in softwood plantations.
- 15% of the forestry workforce are located in the Great Southern region, 36% in the South West, and 48% in the Perth, Fremantle and Peel regions.
- The local government areas with the highest proportion of their workforce employed in forestry are Nannup (18% of the labour force works in forestry),

Manjimup (14%), Plantagenet & Denmark (8%), Bridgetown-Greenbushes (8%), Dardanup and Donnybrook-Balingup (6%), Albany (4.3%), Harvey (3%) and Bunbury (3%). In all other local government areas, less than 3% of employment is directly dependent on the forest industry.

- Forestry employment is growing rapidly in the Great Southern region as harvesting of bluegum plantations expands, having risen from just 20 people in 1991 to 260 by 2001-02 when harvesting of bluegum plantations began, and by 2005-06 to 844 people.
- In general, the forest industry has a higher proportion of full-time employment than the WA workforce as a whole, and a lower proportion of part-time and casual employment.
- The forest industry has a much higher proportion of male workers and lower proportion of female workers than the WA average. In August 2006, 81.5% of forest industry workers were male and 18.5% were female.
- Forest industry workers are younger than the average for the WA workforce.

### **Public seminars Monday 17 November & Tuesday 18 November**

Dr Schirmer will present these findings in:

- Albany at 1.30pm Monday 17 November at the Department of Agriculture, Albany Highway.
- Bunbury at 2.00pm Tuesday 18 November at the Forest Products Commission, Robertson Drive, Bunbury.

All members of the public are invited. Dr Schirmer will be available to speak with the media following the seminars.

#### **Contact:**

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