

Wood Encouragement Policy Review

Questionnaire

Background

The Government's Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy (the Policy) took effect on 21 July 2017. The Policy aims to increase the use of sustainably sourced forest and wood products within Government procurement activities, particularly in building and construction projects and, where relevant, in goods and services procurement.

This was the first such policy implemented by a state government in Australia, and followed the adoption of wood encouragement policies by a number of councils on the mainland.

Review

The Department of State Growth is undertaking a review of the Policy" to confirm that the Policy is achieving its aims and identify any measures that can further support the use of forest and wood products.

It is expected that the Review will provide an insight into:

- **The degree** to which the Policy is achieving its objectives.
- **Any impediments** to the Policy achieving its aims; and
- **Required improvements** to the Policy and its operation.

Your Feedback

To support the review, it would be appreciated if you could arrange for completion and return of this questionnaire

To: graeme.nibbs@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

By: **Friday, 18 September 2020**

If you have any questions regarding the review or questionnaire, please contact Graeme Nibbs, by email or telephone on (03) 6166 4461.

Your details

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Questions

1. What do you see as the benefits of the Wood Encouragement Policy

The primary benefit is in the raising of awareness of wood alternatives for procurement of building and construction and other services by the Tasmanian Government. It also potentially provides a pathway to a cleaner carbon future with lower emissions and increased sequestration.

2. What are the impediments (if any) to the use of the Wood Encouragement Policy?

More needs to be done on ensuring compliance with the terms of the policy and to ensuring that specification decisions are weighted towards using products sourced from within Tasmania as a high preference.

We have recently witnessed a specifier from overseas specifying a considerable volume of wood for a project, but it was all sourced from overseas. Action should be contemplated to provide a considerable weighting towards the specification of wood from within Tasmania in a similar manner as the buy local initiative.

The policy should be expanded to take account of activity by local Councils, GBE's and any other body that is in receipt of Government investment as part of any project.

Knowledge of the policy does not appear to be at a high level and more should be done to ensure compliance. This includes in areas not historically attracting the use of wood where substitution is possible and in fact environmentally beneficial.

An assessment process of comparing the embodied energy within products specified to be used in a building should be undertaken.

The policy should also be considered in respect to the supply of heating/energy solutions in a broad range of public buildings and structures e.g. wood pellets and/or chips for heating swimming pools (Smithton), pellet/briquette heaters in public housing, biomass energy

heaters in hospitals, aged persons homes etc. This would permit viable and beneficial alternative uses to woodchip exports or whole log exports.

Where timber products are not currently available for the intended purpose specifiers should work with industry to design a wood-based alternative through adaptation of design or architectural specification.

3. Have any of your customers acknowledged the Wood Encouragement Policy as an important part of their decision making?

N/A

4. How could the Wood Encouragement Policy be improved?

More wood use will lead to substantial savings in carbon release and must therefore be driven harder particularly where wood can be substituted for other products.

Under the purpose it states the policy will 'facilitate the culture of wood', which will be difficult to measure. Instead alternative wording should be considered to encourage people to think wood first as the primary product for the building and construction industry.

Other suggestions are contained within our response to Q2.

5. In addition to the Wood Encouragement Policy, are there any other measures which could help your business supply more wood or wood products?

In addition to some of the issues set out in our response we believe a clear and unequivocal strategy by Governments at all levels to utilise Tasmanian/Australian wood products in preference to higher polluting materials in construction will have an enduring benefit for the forest industry with significant spin off benefits in carbon accounting and GHG emissions.

6. Do you have any other suggestions/comments?

It would be worthwhile to know if/how government agencies are encouraging the use of wood since the development of this policy. Are they thinking (promoting) wood first?

If you would like to personally discuss the Wood Encouragement Policy or use of wood generally, please phone or email Graeme Nibbs (03) 61664461 or email graeme.nibbs@stategrowth.tas.gov.au