



Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOREST BILL SETS SCENE FOR NEW ERA

Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson today welcomed the passage of the Forestry Bill 2012 as representing a new era for forestry in NSW.

“The Forestry Bill 2012 will strengthen the governance arrangements and commercial viability of Forests NSW by establishing it as a State-owned corporation, to be known as the Forestry Corporation of NSW,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“Corporatisation will install a commercially-focussed, skills-based Board as part of NSW Government reforms to an industry which has been virtually crippled by the ALP Government’s political objectives and electoral preference dealings.”

Ms Hodgkinson said the governance structure under the new corporation will change, but not the nature of the business and its relationships with stakeholders.

“Forestry Corporation of NSW will remain publicly owned and it will continue to manage NSW’s native and plantation forest estates for the Government and for the people of NSW, with due regard to the multiple uses of the forests, including their environmental and recreational values.

“Other legislation that applies to the management of publicly-owned forests remains in place and there is to be no reduction in the stringent regulatory oversight of native forest harvesting.

“The Bill does not change the ability of members of the community to access State forests, whether they are mountain bikers, hikers, conservation hunters, dog walkers or four-wheel drivers.

“Nor does it change Forest NSW’s roles in road maintenance, fire management, feral animal and weed control.

“Last year an independent study found there was potential to improve the financial performance of Forests NSW by up to \$22 million per annum,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“This is clearly a far better return for the people of NSW if the new Board can achieve these savings.”

The Forestry Bill 2012 modernises the previous Forestry Act, first enacted in 1916, and repeals the obsolete Timber Marketing Act 1977.