

# **TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Government forest access policy will endanger lives – Ministers will have blood on their hands**

A recent announcement from Ministers Mulherin (Primary Industries) and Nelson-Carr (Environment) to provide unfettered public access to State forests will endanger the lives of not only the public but forestry workers as well says forest industry peak body Timber Queensland.

Timber Queensland's CEO Rod McInnes said "This is a crazy policy to encourage the public to roam willy-nilly through State forests including plantation forests without appropriate controls".

"Plantation forests, like mining sites, cane farms and other cropping activities are workplaces and access should be restricted and controlled as it is currently" Mr McInnes continued.

"Our industry has been engaged in developing forest harvesting safety codes together with the Government to ensure the safety of our industry workers. Forest harvesting is a dangerous business and the last thing we want is for members of the public to stumble into a harvesting area and be maimed or killed" Mr McInnes went on to say.

"Plantation roads carry log trucks and other machinery to and from harvesting areas often well away from harvesting sites on roads not designed for public access. One hates to think what will happen when 40 tonnes of log truck on a single lane road emerges from the dust to find a tourist stopped in the middle of the road reading a map or somesuch".

"What's next – encouraging the public to take a drive down an open-cut mine!" Mr McInnes said.

"Queensland's \$2.4 billion per annum timber industry and its 20,000+ workers deserve better from this Government. The Government is locking up native forests and forcing us into plantations and is now supporting dangerous and unsafe workplaces".

"The Government should review this policy and return to controlled access to working forests before someone is killed. There are plenty of locked up natural forests far prettier and more pristine than industrial wood production forests for recreation" Mr McInnes concluded.

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