

MEDIA RELEASE

29 June 2016

Ferguson Fire Inquiry Supports Forest Industry Recommendations

The Forest Industries Federation has welcomed the release of the special inquiry report titled *Reframing Rural Fire Management: Report of the Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire*

“Fire is a huge threat to our timber resources. Forest Industries Federation Executive Director Melissa Haslam said today

“Our Industry has extensive knowledge of working and dealing with fire in forests, our people are highly trained, and equipped with fire-fighting resources, yet the forest industry has been virtually overlooked in the past.

“A review of the report demonstrates the inquirer listened to our industry and took our knowledge in this area seriously.

“Heavy fuel loads which have built up in the native forests need to be managed and FIFWA supports the recommendations to reduce forest fuel loads through prescribed burning and other hazard reduction works such as through forest thinning.

The Inquirer recommends a strategic objective to maintain ‘*a fuel age of less than 6 years across 45% of the landscape*’.

“Greater flexibility in protection priorities has also been recommended ensuring different forms of assets that support livelihoods and business are given due consideration, which would extend to our valuable plantation estates.

“The recommendation to introduce Forest Industry Brigades is a welcomed step in the right direction and FIFWA would seek to have these industry brigades fully integrated into a Rural Fire Service system.

FIFWA now calls for the State Government to act on these recommendations. The next fire season will soon be upon us and we need to act now to implement these recommendations and opportunities as identified by the inquirer” Ms Haslam said.

Melissa Haslam
Executive Director
0439 917 665

FOREST INDUSTRIES FEDERATION WA INC
U1 Abridge House, 5 Turner Ave BENTLEY WA 6102, Phone: 08 9472 3055.