

MEDIA RELEASE

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Timberlink Bell Bay Stage 1 Upgrade Officially Opened by Deputy Nationals Leader Bridget McKenzie and Bridget Archer MP

Timberlink welcomed Deputy Nationals Leader, and Minister for Agriculture, Bridget McKenzie and local MP Mrs Bridget Archer, Federal Member for Bass to its Bell Bay mill this week, to officially open the latest stage of a multimillion-dollar upgrade program to secure the future of the Bell Bay mill.

Timberlink CEO Ian Tyson joined Minister McKenzie and Mrs Archer, alongside employees, key customers and suppliers on a tour of the Timberlink Bell Bay facility, to view the latest upgrades and witness the process of turning renewable plantation logs into engineered structural timber.

This latest round of investment in upgrading the Bell Bay mill has created 90 jobs in the construction phase and crucially 6 new permanent full-time jobs.

“This is a strong endorsement for business in the region and for the forestry sector in Tasmania,” Minister McKenzie said.

Speaking to Bell Bay staff and guests CEO Ian Tyson explained “the upgrades have seen the installation of new state of the art Contra Flow Kilns (CFK), which will cut down waiting times for drying timber, whilst decreasing heat power usage by 30%. A new Lucidyne Scanner that uses state of the art AI technology has been installed in the dry mill, learning with every photo that it takes”. He went on to say that the scanner “is more accurate and will result in a better product for our customers and is the first of its type in Australia.”

Minister McKenzie was particularly impressed with the new continuous flow drying kilns (CFKs). These kilns dry timber more efficiently and at a lower temperature, saving on energy whilst drying more timber than traditional batch kilns. Minister McKenzie commented that “this is a fantastic example of what Australian manufacturing can be in the 21st century, reducing energy usage and costs while becoming more competitive in what is now an international marketplace”.

A new strapper and packer has also been installed, which according to Mr Tyson will “alleviate a bottleneck to improve efficiency and throughput.” Finally, there have been upgrades to the roads network to separate heavy plant equipment from smaller vehicles. Mr Tyson said, “this is a great outcome for improved safety, so our people go home safe, every day.”

Mrs Archer was particularly pleased to see the focus on safety “it is clear that employee safety is paramount at Timberlink. Also, the ongoing investment is great news for those in the community who rely on the mill to support their families”.

Mrs Archer also noted that “Timberlink has continuously invested in this mill to ensure it remains internationally competitive since taking ownership in 2013, while growing and securing employment within the Northern Tasmanian region.” The completion of this current stage of capital works sees a total investment to date of \$27 million dollars, and will further benefit from a \$3.5 million dollar

Federal Government grant that supports a new high tech scanning investment in the greenmill that will be undertaken in 2020.

Mrs Archer went on to state that the sizeable investment was “fantastic for Northern Tasmania”, securing the 650 jobs that directly and indirectly rely on the mill.

Timberlink media contact

Troy Donis | Marketing & Communications Coordinator

P | [03 9212 7441](tel:0392127441) M | [0447 675 818](tel:0447675818)

E | tdonis@timberlinkaustralia.com.au

About Timberlink Australia | New Zealand

Timberlink (timberlinkaustralia.com.au, timberlinknz.co.nz) is a leading Australasian timber products manufacturing business. The business has three sawmills at Bell Bay (Tasmania), Blenheim (New Zealand) and Tarpeena (South Australia) that manufacture plantation structural pine products. Timberlink has sales and distribution teams based in Perth, Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne and sales teams based at the Bell Bay and Blenheim sawmills. Aligning the Timberlink business with forest resources enables the company to have a long-term committed approach to its business and customers. Timber manufacturing is a carbon negative industry. For every cubic metre of dry finished timber produced, 631 kg of carbon dioxide is drawn from atmosphere and retained in the timber over its entire lifetime.

Timberlink is owned by investment funds managed by New Forests, a sustainable real assets investment manager headquartered in Sydney. Founded in 2005, New Forests manages approximately AUD 5 billion in assets under management across 940,000 hectares of forests and land in Australia, New Zealand, Southeast Asia, and the United states. Learn more at www.newforests.com.au