

Whittakers to expand production at Greenbushes

Whittakers Ltd are to expand production at the Greenbushes Sawmill and processing facility. It has reached an agreement with the Forest Products Commission (FPC) to take in an additional 14,400 tonnes of jarrah sawlogs for processing and converting into value-added products including furniture feedstock, flooring and joinery. "Our business has the capacity to expand to these levels" said Whittakers' Chief Executive Officer, Trevor Richardson. "Under these new arrangements we will be able to operate more efficiently with certainty in pricing and log supply".

Mr Richardson indicated that Whittakers would ultimately be employing 33 additional staff at Greenbushes over the next 12 months and would welcome any of the experienced personnel to be stood down at Gunns Manjimup to contact them regarding employment opportunities over the next 12 months.

Mr David Hartley, Acting General Manager of FPC, indicated that the government had worked hard to stabilise the timber industry which had gone through several difficult years. "The industry is still adjusting to a regrowth timber resource and Whittakers' decision to expand its operation signals that it is starting to turn around".

Whittakers mills jarrah, karri and marri sawlogs, and invested \$10 million in 2006 in a new mill for cutting small regrowth logs.

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