



## **Forest Industry Contractors Association**

John Stulen

Chief Executive

john.stulen@fica.org.nz

Tel: 07 9211382

Mob: 027 275 8011

PO Box 6160

Rotorua 3043

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### **Kiwis Need to Take Control of our Forest and Wood Products Industry**

While log exports are booming at the demise of locally produced wood products, a forest industry leader calls for New Zealand to take control of our forest and wood products industry.

“New Zealanders have temporarily lost control of, and the ability to profit fully from, our very own forest industry,” says John Stulen, Chief Executive of the Forest Industry Contractors Association.

“Most of our forests and to a large degree most of our building products companies are owned by Japanese and North American interests,” says Mr Stulen.

Currently New Zealand is experiencing a boom in log exports, as logs are sent to China for processing. However New Zealand sawmills are closing down and kiwis are losing jobs.

“New Zealand is a great place for growing trees – but is that as good as it gets? Is that the best we can get after decades of research and development on our premier species – radiata pine?” Mr Stulen questions.

“Should we not be earning more and creating more jobs for New Zealand workers and companies from the resources our land nurtures for more than 26 years each cycle?” says Mr Stulen.

Carter Holt Harvey’s privately held wood manufacturing businesses are likely to be up for sale soon. It should be attractive to buyers as international pulp and paper prices are on the rise and sawn timber prices will soon begin to rise as demand from leaky home repairs and earthquake rebuilding comes into its own.

Mr Stulen urges Iwi investment groups, and the New Zealand Superannuation Fund to take a closer look at the investment opportunities with the forest and wood products industry.

Mr Stulen says, “Let’s hope our local decision-makers for these and other forest-land-owning groups of investors look to the longer-term horizon as well as recognising the associated benefits of having more control of the future employment prospects for forestry’s rural towns and communities.”

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### **About Forest Industry Contractors Association (FICA)**

FICA’s role is to improve profitability of forest contractors and their clients. This is achieved through professional development programmes including regional seminars, workshops and networking meetings around key forest product regions of the country.