



Media Release

Tasmanian Wins Forestry Award (170805)

Ian Barnes, President of the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA), has announced that Evan Rolley, Managing Director of Forestry Tasmania, has been awarded the N.W. Jolly Medal.

The N W Jolly Medal is the Institute's highest honour. The Award citation reads:

“Awarded as the Institute's highest and most prestigious honour for outstanding service to the profession of forestry in Australia.”

The award will be presented to Evan Rolley at the Institute's AGM Dinner in Canberra on Wednesday 16 November 2005.

Evan Rolley BSC (Forestry), BA FIFA has made an outstanding contribution to forestry and the community of Tasmania in his 30-year career as a professional forester in what is now Forestry Tasmania.

He served an apprenticeship as a field forester, in 1975 in Smithton, supplemented by three years as a District Forester in Launceston. Sandwiched between these two appointments was a term as a specialist in the Fire Management Branch where he studied techniques of remote ignition of prescribed burns, thus removing ground based ignition crews from danger.

Returning to Hobart in 1981, Rolley began a six-year period preparing information about forests and forestry in his role as Forest Information Officer from 1982 to 1986. This role increased his awareness of the social and political dimensions of forestry.

As Chairman of the Tasmanian Division of the IFA in the mid 1980's Evan played a role in the 1985 ANZIF Conference held in Hobart, and about this time he also had the idea of producing a book which honoured the achievements of Australian forestry founding fathers.

Evan successfully oversaw the implementation stage of the Forest Practices Act, as the first Chief Forest Practices Officer from 1986-87. The Act applies to all land tenures in Tasmania. He used his high level of diplomatic skill in persuading forest owners, foresters, harvesting contractors and operators to work harmoniously to achieve good outcomes. The first Forest Practices Code published in 1987 has become a benchmark internationally. His philosophy of continuous improvement through cooperation and mutual obligation has led to strong support of the system through all levels of the industry and recognition in the general community that it provides an appropriate balance between production and preservation.

As Commissioner of Private Forests and Operations from 1987-90 and Chief Commissioner from 1990, Evan Rolley was able to give impetus to Tasmania's journey to sustainability, recognizing that economic viability and scientific robustness have to be demonstrated if the essential social and political support is to be assured. The “environmental revolution” gave rise to conflict between federal and State governments, with public battles fought in the media being a way of life. In a long series of inquiries and agreements on forest use, some confined to Tasmania, some for the whole of Australia, Evan took a leading role as a strategist and as a principal negotiator in decisions on resource use for State Forests.

From the mid-1980's, the Memorandum of Understanding on Woodchip Exports and the Helsham Inquiry were of particular significance for Tasmania. For the nation, the Federal government began a process, starting with the release of the National Forest Policy Statement (1992) followed by the

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development of criteria for the establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system for Australia's forests. This culminated the signing of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement in 1997 followed by other Regional Forestry Agreements (RFA's) throughout Australia.

In fire management, Evan played a leading role in bringing together the three main fire management agencies in Tasmania together (Fire Service, National Parks, Forestry Tasmania) to develop a State Fire Management Protocol. This protocol ensures good co-operation between the three agencies in everything from planning, training and equipment through initial attack and fireground management.

Rolley was principal negotiator in all stages of the RFA process. The RFA has become the agreed Commonwealth-State basis governing most aspects of Tasmanian forestry to the greater benefit of forest industries, private forest owners and improved conservation outcomes. Both major political parties, at State and federal levels have given it active support.

In his role as Managing Director of Forestry Tasmania Evan continues to provide the leadership and vision to create an organisation with unprecedented breadth in its activities including silviculture, timber sales, forest practices, conservation, research, tourism, recreation and education. He has been the inspiration and is a strong driver in developing commercial tourism ventures in State Forests. The ventures clearly demonstrate that working forests and tourism can happily thrive together for the benefit of the whole community.

Evan Rolley is a strong advocate for the development of new markets. He leads a drive for forestry based political and business links with Asian countries, particularly China and Korea, which is producing benefits for Forestry Tasmania, the forest industry and the Tasmanian community. Evan supported the establishment of a Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) site at Warra as part of the LTER international network. The site is a focus for research on wet eucalypt forests and is widely used by local, national and international researchers.

Over recent years Evan has been able to keep a rational approach to public forest management despite a number of misleading public attacks by conservation groups, politicians and the media.

Evan has demonstrated throughout his career a strong commitment to Tasmania's forests, and the broader community. He has strongly supported the concept of good forestry practice based on sound science and practical experience. He has remained in tune with the development of the Tasmanian economy and the aspirations of the community to utilise forests for all their wood and non-wood values.

Supporting Rolley's nomination was an abundance of information covering numerous Conference presentations and professional papers.

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(Photo of Evan Rolley is available to be sent by email.)

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