



MEDIA RELEASE

Activists threaten to destroy forests

The Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) is concerned that during high fire danger periods, forest activists are blocking roads and could hinder fire fighting response efforts.

“Time is a critical factor when fighting fires” said Mr Andrew Wye, Chairman of the Tasmanian Division of IFA. “Comprehensive and free access is critical to support a quick response by firefighting personnel and equipment,” he said.

“The blocking of forest roads by activists could slow the response time taken to reach a fire. This delay increases the risk of escalation in fire intensity, as well as the danger firefighters encounter when fighting such fire,” Mr Wye said.

The IFA respects the democratic rights of individuals and organisations to express their views in appropriate locations. Blocking fire accesses roads is not an appropriate location and may be counterproductive.

“The IFA consider that blocking fire access roads is not supporting conservation, and could result in more forests being lost to fire, and many more animals and plants being killed,” Mr Wye said.

“Forest managers are actively developing appropriate responses to managing fire in a climate of change. The IFA call on activists to change the way they protest in order to reduce the risk of forest fires,” Mr Wye said. “The IFA call on activists to stop blocking roads and to undertake protests in a peaceful and non-threatening manner,” he said.



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