

28 September 2020

Dear WPMA Members,

As I said in my last mailout, I've been talking to all the main political parties as we move towards the Election 2020 and trying to get a sense of their policies for the wood processing and manufacturing sector. I have already reported on Labour, National and Greens policies and said that I was looking to interview **NZ First**.

I spoke to Shane Jones at the end of last week and these are NZ First's policies. NZ First believes that there is more work to be done on providing greater confidence of **log supply to local processors**. The recently passed "Log Monger's Act" is seen as a solid, first step in the process and Mr Jones anticipates that the setting of the regulation to support this Act will dictate what needs to be done next. NZ First would ideally like to see the industry move to robust, but voluntary log supply agreements. If that cannot be achieved, then the party would press for further regulation in the manner that raw milk supply and price is regulated in the dairy industry.

NZ First favours a change in the NZ tax regime to provide manufacturers with opportunity for **rapid depreciation of capital assets**. NZ First believes that the wood industry would benefit from a zero-carbon approach to **public procurement** and to changes in the **Building Code** that would see the low-carbon profile of wood products come to the fore.

NZ First views the opportunity to invest in NZ as a privilege and, as such, will support further revisions to the **Overseas Investment Act** to ensure that overseas buyers of forests provide log supply to local processors and support communities. Mr Jones believes he has already made a difference here by appealing to the goodwill of overseas forest owners but, part driven by the controversial conversion of land/forests to permanent pine, feels that regulation under the OIA may be needed to strengthen this further.

NZ First is concerned about the erosion of forestry's **social licence** but does not think that other parties' policies to restrict "quality" land conversion is the answer. Flexibility of property rights is NZ First's central policy here.

NZ First is seeking to strengthen industry-led training by providing **more apprenticeships** and much greater funding **for vocational** training.

Finally, Mr Jones acknowledged the work that WPMA has led in calling out the **trade-distorting practices** of other countries in support of their manufacturing sectors. He felt that NZ will have greater problems if we continue to believe in "the purity of free trade" and that the entrenched mind-set of officials needs to move on to find new ways to open (export) doors for NZ manufacturers....especially in a post-COVID world where our "fellow travellers (in trade) will simply look after themselves".

I thanked Mr Jones for the untiring support he has given to the NZ wood processing and manufacturing sector and wished him well.

WPMA is a member of the pan-industry, **NZ Construction Industry Sector (CIC)**. Last week the CIC recorded a series of interviews with all the main parties seeking their policies for the construction sector. A link to each of these interviews is below:

## Build an informed vote for the 2020 election

Unsure about who should get your vote? Watching these videos might help! Our Deputy Chair, Malcolm Fleming, and MC Phil Pennington (Radio New Zealand) had a chance to sit down with five spokespersons from the five major political parties to hear how the building and construction policies of their party will stack up against our six key election platforms.

The five interviews can be found below. Thank you to the party spokespersons, David Seymour, Marama Davidson, Duncan Webb, Tim van de Molen, and Hon Shane Jones for taking the time to join us last week. And special thanks to RNZ's Phil Pennington for MC-ing the sessions.

If you want to know more about our 2020 election platforms, [they can be found here](#).

[ACT interview](#)

[Greens interview](#)

[Labour interview](#)

[National interview](#)

[NZ First interview](#)

