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July 2014

## **REVIEW OF AS4707: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The process to review the Australian Standard® for *Chain of custody for forest products* (AS 4707:2006) was initiated in mid-2013 and Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFS Ltd) approved a revised Standard in May 2014 and it was published in July 2014 as AS 4707:2014.

The review of AS 4707:2006 was carried out by a Standards Reference Committee (SRC4707) in accordance with the AFS Ltd procedures and as required by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO). The SRC 4707 comprised 12 people who collectively represent all parts of the forest products industry sector in Australia and span all significant interests. An independent chair was appointed for the committee.

A draft revised standard based on the Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification's ST 2002–2013 was prepared and provided for public comment from 6 September to 15 November 2013. A total of ten submissions were received. Submissions addressed a range of issues and clauses and each of these was specifically discussed by the SRC4707 and a decision was taken on how to deal with each.

The following matters were addressed in responding to comments received:

- clarification of terminology and definitions,
- clarification of the delivery documentation required for certified and other forest-based material
- clarification of the application of the due diligence system to all material but that risk assessment only required for non-certified material
- refinement of the basis for substantiation of concerns raised by third parties
- constraint of the obligation to inform former customers of changes in scope of certification
- availability of guidance on implementation
- options for social, health and safety requirements

The public comment draft included two options for the clause dealing with social, health and safety requirements (9.2.2). The majority of the submissions received, but not all, supported one of these options over the other. This matter was discussed by the SRC4707 at some length and a third option was ultimately agreed upon as the basis for the final version of the Standard. The final version was put to a formal ballot of the SRC4707 and consensus was achieved.

Richard Stanton  
National Secretary