

Forestry Industry statement following lockdown as at 18th August 2021

The Eastland Wood Council asks the people of our industry to take care of themselves and their whanau and continue to follow the government guidelines.

Says, Daniel Williams, Chairman of the Eastland Wood Council AND General Manager, Ngati Porou Forests, “This lockdown adds to the challenges our industry has been navigating with the drop in log prices, the backlog of wood, queues of ships the result of delays with the wharf repairs and adverse weather events.”

“Ngati Porou Forests has stopped its operations. The health and safety of our people will always be our priority. We look forward to recommencing once we are out of level 4 lockdown.”

Says, Bill Wheeler; Regional Manager, Ernslaw One AND Board Member, Eastland Wood Council, “As with any NZ business, unless deemed essential, we have had to stop work, this meant we have had to halt all forest related activity which includes our planting, pruning, thinning, harvesting, carting and other ancillary operations.”

“The impact on Ernslaw and its business partners is very significant and unfortunately given the speed at which this lockdown occurred, there may not have been time for some to put creative measures in place for the next three days.”

“The loss in production and cost is very real, however, with the entire supply chain shutdown there would have been little benefit in continuing production (if we could) as with no trucking we wouldn’t be able to move logs to market, and as we know the Port is also closed and not accepting any logs.”

This latest event will not add further to congestion on the wharf and skid sites, because everything has halted, nothing is being produced, nothing is being carted to the Port, and as we know a high number of ships are awaiting the lifting of the lockdown so loading of ships can recommence.

Says Philip Hope, CEO of the Eastland Wood Council (EWC); EWC members are providing as much reassurance and guidance to staff, contractors and crews as possible, based on the information at hand and we look forward to resuming operations as soon as this lockdown ends.

EWC’s message to the forestry industry and too Tairāwhiti is to adhere to the Government messaging and guidelines, and keep in contact with pakeke, whanau and those around you (at a safe distance). Remember, supermarkets are still operating, so perhaps assist those who can’t assist themselves.

<https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/current-alert-level/>

Nga manaakitanga

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