

Plant gives economy a boost

Ta ANN Tasmania's new \$16 million plywood plant at Smithton is the result of 10 years of hard work, perseverance and strong community support, says Ta Ann Tasmania's executive chairman, Hamed Sepawi. "The directors of Ta Ann Tasmania are pleased that patience and perseverance towards our company vision of additional-value-adding in Tasmania has reached this new level with our state-of-the-art plywood mill now up and running," Mr Sepawi said.

Ta Ann's Smithton plant is producing a new premium grade product that will be sold mainly in the Australian market under the brand T-Ply. "We began the journey to reach this point over 10 years ago with planning and then construction of veneer mills, firstly in the Huon in 2007 and then here in Smithton in 2008.

"Very difficult conditions for trading and the adverse targeting of our markets made it very challenging to hold on to the vision that first excited us about the prospects of investing in Tasmania," Mr Sepawi said.

"The community and bipartisan political support that we have received over the past three years has been a strong reminder that finding a way through difficult circumstances requires patience and perseverance," he said. Mr Sepawi said the numbers for the investment in the plywood plant



VISION REALISED: Ta Ann Tasmania's new \$16 million plywood plant at Smithton is the result of 10 years of hard work, according to executive chairman Hamed Sepawi.

stacked up well, with the benefits of expanded local employment, local suppliers, local income and improving company financial outcomes.

"Some \$16 million of capital expenditure has been added by the plywood mill to the \$80 million

already invested in the two veneer mills, so that just under \$100 million is now on the ground, adding value to logs for which the main alternate use was previously processing into wood chips.

The new plywood mill injected \$8.5 million into the local economy

during its construction and is currently providing new jobs for 37 people. As markets are developed employment numbers are expected to double before reaching 120 when in full production, injecting about \$40 million a year into the local economy.

Ta Ann's two rotary veneer plants at Smithton and in the Huon Valley currently employ 100 FTEs and over the past five years have contributed \$185 million into the regional economy.

Mr Sepawi said the plywood development project would not have been successful without the hard work of many people, including its local team of employees and managers and all those involved in the building and construction work, the machinery installation and the training and commissioning works. "Thanks also to the team from Hexion, the plant's glue suppliers, who worked closely with us to develop a successful eucalyptus plywood product, and also to the EWPA who have worked closely with our local management to test our plywood products and establish the basis for the special engineering properties of our final products," Mr Sepawi said.

"Ta Ann's emphasis is on continuing to invest in research and to develop new products and increase the range of log grades that can be profitably processed through our veneer and plywood plants. "The production of high-quality plywood and the practice of only using logs from approved forests creates the opportunity for Ta Ann to position itself in the market as a responsible forests product supplier in Australia," Mr Sepawi said.



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Ta Ann Tasmania is a responsible forests product supplier, only using logs from approved forests. We are a business that through our processes of sustainable log supply and efficient processing, store carbon in high value solid wood products for many generations.

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