



# Plantation Timbers



## Plantation Timbers Group Service Document Summary

Plantation Timbers Group Pty Ltd (PTG) offers a project management and integrated forestry service to clients with an ongoing annual management and maintenance programme. A copy of our "Terms and Conditions" is supplied in our Forestry Management Agreement.

PTG offers a property acquisition and plantation management system supported by a quality assurance program covering individual processes from land acquisition, plantation establishment, ongoing maintenance, harvesting, logistics and product marketing.

PTG can source existing Timberland assets and negotiate terms and conditions for Clients. PTG has in the past sourced cleared agricultural land through an established network of land agents and is now compiling a list existing plantations that once harvested may become available for establishing second rotation tree crops. PTG maintains a data base of potential properties for consideration in future land sourcing activities.

The Company has a high level of administrative support and reporting which ensures that the quality program is followed. It is recognised that in order for plantations to reach their potential, risks need to be minimised in the following areas; land assessment, site preparation, seedling selection, planting techniques, weed competition, nutrition, insect and vertebrate pests and fire control.

PTG forestry management ensures customers that economic, environmental and social factors are integrated into Plantation Timbers Group's forestry management system. PTG commits to maintaining and enhancing this Quality System as part of PTG's integrated business model.

PTG has high Occupational Health and Safety industry standards which are formalised by staff and contractor inductions.

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## Offtake Agreements

PTG can use existing marketing arrangements to enter into Offtake agreements with buyers to purchase clients trees and any carbon/environmental credits.

PTG can manage both the harvesting and sale of the Clients Timber, Carbon and Environmental credits. PTG will endeavour to obtain the best market value for the client.

## Insurance

PTG offers to arrange and administer timber plantation insurance against damage to the trees by, for example fire and/ or other insurable risks. The cost of insurance is charged to clients.

## Carbon and Environmental Benefits

PTG will identify and realise the value of any Carbon and/or environmental generated by clients trees or land.

## Forestry Information

PTG provides relevant forestry information on a regular basis to clients on global and local markets. PTG memberships include the Green Triangle Regional Plantation Committee, the Institute of Foresters of Australia, the Australian Forest Growers, and the Responsible Investment Association Australasia.

## Property Selection, Identification and Assessment Procedure

The following broad guidelines will be used for selecting Timberland and properties for tree plantations:

- Property size will be not less than 50 plantable hectares.



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- Long term average annual rainfall will be in excess of 650 mm for Hardwood Woodchip and Softwood log.
- Properties will be within 120 km from the nearest export or processing facility for Hardwood Woodchip and Softwood log.
- Soil depth and soil type will be sufficient to allow good soil moisture holding capacity.
- Properties selected will generally have a sound fertiliser history.
- Remnant native vegetation will be protected and where possible enhanced.
- Parts of the property subject to waterlogging or excess salinity will be excluded from the planting area.
- Development restrictions (such as zoning requirements, oil leases, water licences) will be considered prior to land acquisition.
- Future logging access will be taken into account when selecting properties.
- An independent Forester/Soil Scientist is contracted to carry out a detailed suitability soil assessment and property report.
- Information on underground cables through "Dial Before You Dig" is gathered.
- A GPS survey of the property is undertaken for the preparation of maps and to determine the nett plantable area.
- A property/timberland report will be prepared and will be submitted to Clients for preliminary approval.

Note that PTG applies the Victorian Code of Practice for Timber Production to all its plantation estate and is preparing the necessary documentation to meet ISA 14001 certification.



## Land Acquisition and Due-diligence Procedure

- Potential properties are selected on approval of the Independent Forester/Soil Scientist's evaluation of soil physical, chemical and environmental parameters. Part of the assessment is an estimate net plantable area and likely productivity. If these meet PTG's criteria, the current landowner/land agent is advised of a likely offer and if approved by Client and the landowner, PTG commences negotiations for purchase.
- A property file is established with a copy of the Real Estate Checklist, which is completed as certain steps are undertaken.
- A title search is undertaken through the appropriate shire to obtain current zoning details etc.
- All relevant information is gathered for the preparation of the purchase documents.
- The "Offer of agreement to purchase form" is presented to the property owner or land agent. A letter is sent to property owner confirming details and outlining offer.

Following settlement a Plantation Development Notice is submitted to the relevant shire council.



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## Plantation Management Plans

A site specific management plan is prepared for each property selected.

A GPS survey of each property is undertaken and an aerial photograph acquired and an operational map prepared showing net plantable area, property boundaries, main roads, CFA or CFS map reference, shire or council area, exclusions (such as unsuitable soils, swamps and native vegetation), water points and property access. Prior to the fire season, a copy of the map and other relevant details will be placed in a cylinder near the main entrance for use by contractors, inspectors and fire fighting authorities.

Signage will be erected at entrance to property showing company details and contact information.

## Plantation Layout

Site design will comply with the Victorian Code of Practice to Timber Production, local shire planning requirements and other State and National policies and Local Government regulations. The tree farms will be developed with the aim to minimise environmental impact.

To facilitate ease of movement around the plantation, internal compartment size will not exceed 45 hectares. Boundary firebreaks will be at least 10m wide. Internal access tracks will be 10m wide. Firebreak and access track layout will comply with all shire council and CFA (or CFS) requirements. Crossings with culverts will be placed over key drains to ensure good access. Buffers and setbacks as recommended by the Victorian Code of Practice to Timber Production will be used.

## Plantation Establishment and Preparation

On green field sites, properties will be cleared, where necessary, of non-essential internal infrastructure. Seedlings will be established on planting lines that have been ripped and mounded to aid root penetration and drainage. Pest plant and animals will be controlled to avoid any browsing damage to newly planted trees. Where control measures require chemical applications, only registered chemicals will be used and contractors/employees will require the necessary certification for application.

Plantation layout will follow normal forestry practice for the Region considering soil type, slope, erodability etc.

Where a second rotation plantation is being established, PTG will use the current best practice to establish a new crop, be it seedling or coppice.

PTG is a party to Green Triangle Regional Plantation Committee's "Good Neighbour Charter". This has enhanced communication between PTG, our neighbours and community groups. It enables PTG to work in partnership to address local issues of mutual concern.

Normally trees are fertilised at planting which normally occurs during winter or early spring. A follow-up weed control treatment occurs in the second year, with a second fertiliser treatment normally applied in the third year after establishment as per the management and maintenance agreement.





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## Environmental Care

All operations will be conducted in a responsible manner. Environmental issues taken into consideration by PTG include:

- Contractors maintain a clean work environment during operations on properties under management.
- Appropriate disposal of empty chemical containers.
- Remnant native vegetation has been protected and preserved.
- Earthworks are undertaken to minimise soil erosion or soil movement.
- Preference for firebreaks prepared by cultivation rather than using chemicals.

## PTG manages and maintains the following documents:

- Quality Assurance Systems and Procedures – instructions that provide information on how to undertake various tasks and who is responsible for those tasks.
- Checklists – recording forms to provide proof of compliance to the QA system.
- Specifications – technical details of specific works.

## Contractor Selection

Selection Criteria for suitability of contractors to be based on:

- Technical qualification, previous experience, previous performance, licensing, registration and insurance.
- Production of evidence of hazard and risk assessments for plant, tasks, substances and OH&S management in accordance with legislation in the state of operation.
- Contractors shall be engaged on the basis of a legally binding contract. PTG shall determine the terms and conditions of such contract and require contractors to have appropriate insurance coverage.
- Contractors are advised of PTG OH&S requirements and the need to comply with the Victorian Code of Forest Practice for Timber Production 2007, Guidelines for Plantation Forestry in South Australia and Code of Practice for Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations 2009.

## Plantation Management

PTG has a comprehensive monitoring program. All plantations are inspected monthly during their first year, quarterly during their second and third year, then half yearly until harvest. Where problems are identified or anticipated, more regular checks are scheduled and remedial actions taken.

Survival counts are undertaken in the autumn following establishment. Plantation Timbers Group requires a minimal establishment of 90% of seedlings planted. Any replanting is carried out in winter (12 months after establishment).

Ideally permanent monitoring/measurement plots are establishment each plantation. All Blue Gum plantations are sampled at age 4.5 and 7.5 years to estimate growth rate and wood production.

Periodic winter foliar sampling is undertaken to evaluate the nutritional status of the plantation and determine the need for supplementary fertilisation.

PTG is a member the Forest Owners Conference, a collaborative that exchanges intelligence on fire protection and pest plant and animal strategies and control coordination.



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## Fire Management Procedure

- PTG's Forest Industry Brigade (as per Country Fire Authority Act 1958 and Regulations 1998) is registered with the CFA and assists the CFS/CFA and other plantation owners in suppression of wildfires in or near the Clients plantations.
- PTG undertakes annual pre-fire season works including maintaining existing firebreaks and ensure accessibility for fire control.
- PTG liaises with CFA (or CFS) brigades to ensure local fire fighting personnel are aware of access within the plantations.
- Water points are checked prior to the summer and water point signs erected.
- The compartment map is placed in a cylinder near the main entrance and sign.
- PTG ensures all emergency equipment is on site and in good working order.

## Meetings

PTG meets regularly with clients, delegates and committees to discuss plantation issues.

## Harvesting and Logistics

PTG can arrange for the harvesting of clients plantations under the Code of Forest Practise for Timber Production and the responsible authority (Local Government in Victoria).

## Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare

Plantation Timbers Group Pty Ltd is committed to the health and safety of all of its employees, customers, visitors and contractors with the primary goal to have an injury free workplace.