

Woodfab Timber Ltd

Good afternoon

I am an employee of Woodfab Timber Limited and welcome the draft legislation and encourage its implementation.

I have worked in Woodfab Timber for 3 years but have worked in the timber industry all my working life and am very concerned about my job and the jobs of my colleagues. I had read countless articles in the media over the last number of months about the shortage of timber and job losses due to this. However, I am seeing the slowdown in intake first hand. Coillte have held no auction since July and there are no auctions currently scheduled for the rest of this year.

I understand from management that we have no commitment of supply from late 2020. They have received assurance after assurance that there will be an increase in the number of felling licences granted by the Department but to date we are not seeing any increase in log supply. Since the introduction of new forestry licensing procedures in 2019, the processing and issuing of forestry licences have been seriously disrupted. The current system is not fit for purpose and the ability to operate and plan is being impeded by administrative inadequacies and procedural barriers. We believe that these issues can be addressed and solutions identified but action must be taken now before more jobs are lost rather than created and the true potential of the industry undermined.

There are long delays to licences caused by the FAC. At the current run rate it will take 18 months to clear the backlog of licences with the FAC. The FAC simply cannot cope with the workload. The changes to the legislation should help this situation providing the FAC is adequately and quickly resourced. These delays are hindering forestry activity and damaging the industry. It is vital that the FAC is reformed to make it fit for purpose.

Kind regards

Woodfab Timber Limited