



Australian Government

THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT

FOREST
CONSERVATION FUND



Fact Sheet 4a: Centrelink Advice

The attached information is provided by Centrelink to assist landowners interested in participating in the Forest Conservation Fund programme.

Australian Government Forest Conservation Fund



Background

The Forest Conservation Fund (FCF) is a voluntary programme established to protect old growth and under-reserved forest communities on private land in Tasmania. It was developed under the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement. The Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources administers the FCF with assistance from the Tasmanian Government Department of Primary Industries and Water (DPIW).

Landowners who participate in the FCF may be eligible for two payments:

1. an upfront payment when the proposal is accepted and the financial agreement between the landowner and the Australian Government is signed, **and**
2. a second payment when the conservation agreement is finalised with DPIW.

Will this affect my payment from Centrelink?

The two payments to eligible landowners under the FCF will not be treated as income. This means an income test will not apply. However, the payments may be treated as an asset depending on how the money is used and are therefore subject to the assets test. Further, if payments are invested they may also be deemed to earn income under the income test provision. For example:

- if the funds are used to buy a car, the assets test would apply, **or**
- if the funds are placed in a financial investment, the funds become a financial asset and therefore would be assessed as an asset and subject to income test deeming rules.

Notifying Centrelink of a change in circumstance

To ensure your Centrelink records are correct, please contact Centrelink if you receive the FCF payments or the market value of your land changes as a result of the conservation agreement.

Are there tax implications?

Participating landowners may be eligible for capital gains tax concessions and income tax deductions. For more information regarding the tax treatment of these payments, please phone the Australian Taxation Office on **13 2478**, visit www.ato.gov.au, phone the FCF Service Provider on **1300 854 456**, or email fcf@environment.gov.au

How can I find out more about the FCF?

A FCF Service Provider has been contracted by the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources to manage the overall delivery of the FCF, and is the main point of contact for landowners interested in the programme.

If you would like further information on the FCF please phone the FCF Service Provider on **1300 854 456**, email fcf@environment.gov.au or visit www.environment.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf

www.centrelink.gov.au



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Centrelink contacts

The Centrelink Financial Information Service (FIS) is a free education and expert information service available to everyone. The FIS assists you to make informed decisions about financial issues for your current and future needs.

Financial Information Service 13 2300

Retirement 13 2300

Parent or Guardian 13 6150

Disabilities, Sickness and Carers 13 2717

To speak to Centrelink in languages other than English 13 1202

Customer Relations Freecall™ 1800 050 004
(for complaints, compliments and suggestions)

Australian Government Services Fraud Tip-off Line 13 1524

TTY* enquiries Freecall™ 1800 810 586
*TTY is only for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment. A TTY phone is required to use this service

To make an appointment 13 1021

Go to our website at www.centrelink.gov.au

Check the 'we speak your language' link on Centrelink's website for information in languages other than English.

Important: Calls to '13' numbers from a standard telephone service can be made from anywhere within Australia for not more than the cost of a local call (call charges may vary depending upon the telephone service provider). Calls to '1800' numbers are free of charge. Calls from public and mobile telephones may be charged at a higher rate.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments available.

What are your responsibilities?

- It is your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment and to make the application, having regard to your particular circumstances.
- The information is accurate as at February 2007, but may of course change. If you use this publication after that date, please check with Centrelink that the details are up to date.

From what date are benefits payable?

Most government payments are paid from, or after, the date which the application is made. So the sooner you lodge the application the quicker you may be paid.

What is the position if you deal with a third party?

You may deal with a third party who is not a member of Centrelink's staff. If you do so, please remember that Centrelink has not authorised any third parties to provide information or advice to you about payments.