

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Friday, 29 November 2024

FORESTRY GRANT HELPS BUSINESS AIM FOR THE SKIES

The Allan Labor Government is supporting local businesses and workers in former timber industry towns to expand local business opportunities and create more jobs.

As part of the Forestry Transition Fund the Labor Government is investing \$789,766 into Helico Australia, an Alexandra based specialist helicopter servicing business, to expand their businesses.

The investment will go towards the construction of a new \$1.5 million purpose built maintenance facility and headquarters, to meet the growing demands of the aviation industry across Australia.

The new premises will consist of larger workshops with work bays for helicopter and engine tear-down and rebuilds, a spare parts store, paint booths, sheet metal manufacturing and non-destructive testing. There will also be a dedicated area for innovative engineering design and fabrication technologies.

Helico Australia is planning to use local tradespeople for the construction of the new facilities, having already established relationships with trades in the region.

The business currently has 24 staff, and when the new facilities are built it will employ additional full-time employees in a variety of roles ranging from engineers to hangar and grounds staff and trainees.

Helico Australia services and rebuilds Robinson helicopters that are used by the agricultural and resources industries in northern Australia for stock mustering and transport, as well as the delivery of supplies during the wet season.

Round 2 of the Forestry Transition Fund, which supports job creation and business development in and around communities impacted by the end of native timber harvesting, is now open. A \$20,000 employment incentive payment for the employment of ex-native timber workers is also available.

Applications close on 31 October 2025, for more information visit deeca.vic.gov.au/forestry or call 1800 318 182.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"This is a great example of a business expanding and offering opportunities, not only for qualified aviation workers but also those starting out in their career, to help deliver a prosperous future in the region."

Quotes attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"This expansion by Helico Australia will not only provide additional local jobs but will also bring economic benefits to the wider community, I encourage eligible local businesses to apply for Round 2 of the Forestry Transition Fund to expand and diversify into new business opportunities."

Quote attributable to Helico Australia Director Hylke Kijlstra

"This grant will allow us to build the facility we have dreamt of since we started Helico. I am grateful to the Victorian Government for giving us this opportunity and investing in our community."

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