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HISTORY OF WOMBAT FOREST LOGGING CONTRACTORS

Background Prior to the early 90's sawmillers hired independent logging contractors to fall and cart logs to their mills, financial arrangements were handled directly between the two parties generally in an amicable fashion. Contractors usually worked for one or two sawmills and often formed long term working relationships. The table below shows the main contractors servicing Wombat sawmills.

Sawmills	***Contractors***
Dwyers	G&F Howard
Woodwards	Cec Slater
Blackforest	Woodruff & Thow
Friths	Thow
Corrigan	Mc Carthy
C.S.R	Pritchard
Boas	
Barkers	
Harding	

In the late '80'sConservation Forests and Lands were the state department responsible for forest management, they administered the Wombat Forest through the Geelong Office, where Malcolm Mc Dougall was senior forest officer. At this time Kevin Waring was head of CF&L commerce branch and John Wright..Richard Stone..... Adrian Hatch was the forest planner at Daylesford CF&L office

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5th May '90 **Article Ballarat Courier** ***"Daylesford loggers fear for their jobs".***
Local logging contractors were concerned when advertisements appeared in statewide press stating that sawlog and residual roundwood harvesting would be integrated and management of contractors would be handled by the state department or Midland Harvesting Group a recently formed association of sawmillers . The contractors claimed the dept "had thrown their jobs out to tender" and feared local jobs would be lost. The dept said a meeting would be called where the contractors would find out details of the new contracting proposals

George Howard was president of the Wombat Integrated Logging Association, a group which formed in response to the perceived threat from new contractual arrangements

1st June '90 **Article Ballarat Courier** ***"Loggers reasonably happy"***
At the meeting referred to above the dept responded to contractors concerns by telling them that they would preferably employ local people and there was likely to be no job losses but "no guarantees" were given. Logging contractors who attended the meeting were told that the advertisement had appeared in statewide newspapers as CF&L were a government department.

Sept '91 Contractors forced to form companies to enable them to apply for individual workcover arrangements, this occurred statewide in response to the rising cost of insurance born by sawmillers. Local companies that formed in the Wombat included

Northern Logging with directors Snelling and Thow

Central Logging Co a joint venture between three separate Co's

George . Howard .....
Frank. Howard .....
Cec Slater .....

Mc Carthy went it alone he was main pulp carter

Woodfruff it has been stated that Woodruff was advised to go it alone

Pritchard.

'92 Management of Wombat forest went smoothly in the eyes of the contractors however rumours abounded that the dept felt there were still too many contractors in the Wombat

'93 Midland Logging Co issued seperate contracts to the individual companies that made up the Central Logging Co. All three companies applied for contracts, Cec Slater & Frank Howard were successful, George Howard was not so successful he was told if he wanted work he could work under his son Frank's contract. Midland Logging Co issued letter to Cec Slater stating all contracts would be handled through Woodruffs and

'94 No contracts were issued to companies (?) contractors paid directly by Midland

195 Woodruff issued with 5 year contract.