



GREAT SOUTHERN  
LIMITED



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Great Southern bushfire expert takes on investigative role**

The manager of Great Southern Limited's Gippsland plantation estate, Brendan Pippen, has been seconded to a specialist body which is investigating the devastating recent Victorian bushfires.

Dr Pippen has a PhD in Bushfire Fuel Behaviour, which he gained as a scholarship holder with the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (Bushfire CRC). He also has extensive forestry industry experience.

During the first part of his three month secondment to the Bushfire CRC, Brendan was part of a team collecting data from the field after the bushfires; he is now working with other fire experts from state fire agencies and research organisations to examine the fires.

Over the course of his secondment, Dr Pippen will be the Bushfire CRC's contact person for the investigation into the Churchill fire. He will consolidate data collected by the Fire Behaviour Team and assist the CFA with information. The information will be made available to assist the Royal Commission in their investigations and inquiries.

The Bushfire CRC was initially formed in 2003, bringing together researchers and other experts from private sector organisations, industry associations, universities and government research agencies such as the CSIRO, and other end users.

Dr Pippen's qualifications and experience make him ideally qualified to take on the temporary role.

He joined Great Southern in September 2008 as regional manager, based in Sale, with the key task of overseeing the company's Gippsland plantation estate. This includes 5000 hectares of blue gum and shining gum plantations across 35 properties in the Gippsland region.

Great Southern's General Manager – Plantations Division, Gavin Ellis, said: "We are proudly supporting Brendan in his temporary role with the Bushfire CRC, with the sincere hope that his work plays some part in minimising the likelihood of any repeat of this tragedy in the future."

Great Southern suffered very minor damage in the February bushfires, with approximately 40 hectares of a single property in Gippsland affected by fire.

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