

DALGARUP COUPE — HARVESTING

**325. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Forestry:**

I refer to the decision to stop harvesting in the Dalgarp coupe, near Bridgetown.

- (1) Who first raised the issue of potential old growth in the coupe?
- (2) What involvement did the minister, the Forest Products Commission and the Minister for Environment have in this decision?
- (3) On what basis was the decision made to stop harvesting in the coupe?

**Mr D.J. KELLY replied:**

I thank the member for Warren–Blackwood for the question

- (1)–(3) The member is correct; the Dalgarp 0118 forest coupe is about 15 kilometres west of Bridgetown. I am told the coupe is 174 hectares. It was initially assessed, as is usually the case, by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. It identified 75 hectares of previously unidentified old growth, and that was then reclassified and set aside from harvesting. Since then, the Forest Products Commission has begun harvesting in that coupe. There is in fact only about 14 hectares of forest left to be harvested.

While that harvesting was taking place, members of the community spoke directly to FPC, which was doing the harvesting, and raised with my office and I understand with the Minister for Environment's office that potentially some identified old-growth forest was still in the area to be harvested. DBCA is now reassessing the remaining forest to see whether there is any unidentified old growth that had been missed in the assessment done previously.

DBCA is not my department. The Minister for Environment is responsible for DBCA, and it is through that department that a decision was made to temporarily halt harvesting in that coupe and to make an assessment. It is not uncommon. If the member looks back at when assessments of forests on the harvest list have been made, he will see that it is not uncommon for areas of old growth to be missed. As indicated, when DBCA did the original assessment of that forest, it identified 75 hectares of previously unidentified old-growth forest and that was set aside from the harvest plan.

As a government, we are committed to not harvesting old-growth forest. I think the community is very comfortable with that position. I know members opposite do not support that position, but we, as a government, made that commitment a long time ago and we continue to abide by it. All that is happening, member, is that that assessment is being done by DBCA. When that assessment is made, a decision will take place.

I have to say that last night I looked at a couple of letters the member for Warren–Blackwood had written to me asking me to halt harvesting in a coupe near Pemberton because of some complaints he had had from members of the community there. The member for Warren–Blackwood cannot have it both —

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warren Blackwood, you have a supplementary.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** When we stop harvesting to check for old-growth forest, the member for Warren–Blackwood is not happy. When we go ahead and harvest in Pemberton, the member writes me letters saying not to do it. The member for Warren–Blackwood cannot have it both ways.

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warren–Blackwood, I will take away your supplementary.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** The member cannot have it both ways. The member for Warren–Blackwood is a classic. He writes me letters complaining about things that he did when he was in government. It is one of the classics of opposition: he writes me letters all the time complaining about policies that he put in place when he was Minister for Forestry or Minister for Water. It is a little comedy routine the member has.

We have clear policies in this area. We do not support the logging of old-growth forests. We do support logging jobs in the forestry industry. What is happening in Bridgetown at the moment is that we are simply reassessing the coupe to make sure that no old-growth forest has been previously missed in the assessment of that coupe.