

SANDALWOOD INDUSTRY — MANAGEMENT

8064. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Forestry

I refer to the Department of Environment and Conservation's management of the harvesting of sandalwood on private land through licenses issued under the *Sandalwood Act 1929*, and the Forest Products Commission management of the harvesting of sandalwood on crown land, and I ask:

- (a) how many licensed sandalwood harvesters are in Western Australia;
- (b) of those licensed harvesters at (a), how many are on:
 - (i) crown land;
 - (ii) private land;
 - (iii) pastoral leases; and
 - (iv) land in the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder and the Shire of Coolgardie;
- (c) how many ton of sandalwood are allocated to each harvester;
- (d) how many inspectors are used to check on harvesting quotas;
- (e) do inspectors check on illegal harvesting and, if so, over the last 10 years, how many people have been prosecuted for illegal harvesting of sandalwood;
- (f) how many direct/personal contact meetings have been held between representatives of the Forest Products Commission and the Department of Environment and Conservation with sandalwood harvesters and where were these meetings held;
- (g) what machinery is being used to harvest sandalwood;
- (h) is there a size or weight restriction on the machinery being used to harvest sandalwood; and
- (i) what is the financial return to the Forest Products Commission from sandalwood harvesting this financial year?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a)–(e) These questions should be directed to the Minister for Environment.
- (f) The total number of meetings between the Forest Products Commission (FPC) and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) regarding sandalwood management matters is not documented. Meetings are held on an as required basis, approximately every six months. The meetings take place at both a regional level (Kalgoorlie) and in Perth. The most recent regional meeting occurred on 29 February 2012 at the DEC Kalgoorlie Office. The most recent meeting between the FPC and the DEC licensing division was on 13 January 2012. Outside of face-to-face meetings, open lines of communication exist between the two agencies via telephone, mail and email. FPC sandalwood contractors are visited onsite by FPC operations staff on a weekly/fortnightly basis depending on operational status.
- (g) Sandalwood is lifted from the ground using a front end loader. Bark is removed with a purpose built tumbler.
- (h) There is no weight restriction on sandalwood harvest machines. The recommended machine is a rubber tyred, five to six tonne front end loader with a two tonne lifting capacity.
- (i) The preliminary earnings from sandalwood operations before interest, tax and revaluation effects (pending financial audit) is \$5.2 million. This does not include any allocation of corporate overheads to the sandalwood division.