

SOUTH WEST YABBERUP FOREST — LOGGING FOR BIOMASS PURPOSES

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

- (1) Has there been recent logging in the South West Yabberup Forest for timber to be used for biomass purposes, and if so:
- (a) what approvals did the Forest Products Commission gain from the Environmental Protection Agency for logging for this purpose; and
 - (b) will logging for biomass be undertaken in any other forests in Western Australia in the future?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (1) (a)-(b) No harvesting occurs in any South West forests specifically for timber for biomass. The Forest Management Plan (FMP) recognises that other products will be produced during harvesting operations conducted principally to produce high value products such as sawlogs.

During Autumn 2008, in conjunction with Request for Tender 2904 (RFT 2904) for the sale of low grade logs, approximately 8 hectares of Yabberup forest was subject to the removal of all forest products available from the bole of trees not required for retention, in full accordance with current silvicultural guidelines. This resulted in approximately 1700 tonnes of low grade logs being produced. The removal of all such timber, markets for all of which have not been available, was undertaken to give prospective tenderers an indication of the quantity and quality of low grade logs available from integrated native forest harvesting.

The harvesting operation was done in accordance with the requirements of the FMP and associated guidelines. As the FMP has received EPA approval, no additional approvals were required to undertake the harvesting of this area.

As a result of RFT 2904, Griffin Energy was given preferred tenderer status. Griffin Energy's Tender submission identified that their plans are for the low grade log material to be used as biomass fuel to co-fire a coal fired power station to produce a proportion of their energy from renewable sources. On the basis that Griffin Energy is successful in bringing these plans to fruition, it would enter into further negotiations with FPC regarding the ongoing supply of low grade logs and residue material from standard FPC operations.