

GUNNS LIMITED — MANJIMUP FACILITY CLOSURE

4749. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Forestry

I refer to the Gunns Limited closure of the Deanmill facility in Manjimup, and I ask:

- (a) what help is available for the Manjimup timber workers;
- (b) what help is available for small businesses affected by the closure;
- (c) what job creation projects are being sponsored by:
 - (i) Government;
 - (ii) the private sector; and
 - (iii) the South West Development Commission?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a) The Manjimup Volunteer & Resource centre is available to provide information, advice and assistance.
A new \$20,000 training fund has been made available through the South West Development Commission to assist in providing new skills and qualifications. Specifically, this money will assist to bridge the gap between training charges and available subsidies, enabling training to happen quickly and where it is most needed.
Government is investigating the possibility for Deanmill residents to be able to purchase houses they currently rent from Gunns.
- (b) A \$70,000 support package has been made available by the State Government. This will comprise a range of advice and grants of up to \$1,500 to enable businesses to obtain financial, legal and accounting services.
- (c)
 - (i) The State Government and the Manjimup Shire, through the South West Development Commission and the local Volunteer and Resource Centre, have increased the provision of a range of services in Manjimup in response to Gunns' announcement. This has included potential employers making themselves available at two well attended information expos in February and March.
 - (ii) Sawmills in nearby towns have employed some of the displaced timber workers. The State Government, with the support of the community, has encouraged mining companies to consider Manjimup as a potential source of employees and Rio Tinto have recently offered fly in fly out employment to twenty four people in Manjimup, many of who have been affected by Gunns' decision.
 - (iii) In addition to (ci), the South West Development Commission will allocate an Economic Development Officer to look specifically at options for developing Manjimup's economic base.