

GOVERNMENT PLANTATIONS — PRUNING

8020. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Forestry

In relation to Government shared or joint plantations:

- (a) how much pruning has been done on Government shared or joint plantations;
- (b) how much has this pruning cost;
- (c) what funding has been made available for tree pruning;
- (d) has pruning been contracted out;
- (e) if trees have not been pruned, how much, on average, would this failure to prune diminished the value of a mature tree;
- (f) have, or will, all contracts with tree growers be(en) honoured in full; and
- (g) have the standards or methods of tree pruning been maintained to an acceptable level for all tree growers?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a) To date 1630 hectares of the Forest Products Commission's (FPC) eucalypt sawlog estate has been low pruned and a further 151 hectares has been high pruned.
- (b) Approximately \$764,000 has been spent on pruning of FPC's eucalypt sawlog sharefarms.
- (c) There is currently no budget allocation for pruning of FPC sharefarm plantations. FPC undertakes management operations, including pruning where necessary, that are consistent with good silvicultural practice and future forest product markets.
- (d) The majority of pruning works completed on sharefarm properties have been undertaken by private contractors with some small areas completed by FPC staff.
- (e) It is difficult to accurately estimate product values for the eucalypt sawlog program as there is not currently a market for pruned, plantation-grown eucalypt sawlogs in Western Australia.
- (f) FPC is complying with its obligations under the relevant Timber Sharefarming Agreements and will continue to do so.
- (g) All pruning has been completed in accordance with FPC's internal guidelines and these guidelines are consistent with best practice.