

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates February 2011
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 107

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: EC Budget Measures

Proof Hansard Page: 57 (21/02/2011)

Senator Nash asked:

Senator NASH—Can you clarify for us the terminating measures, 30 June 2011, where the drought assistance exceptional circumstances are all terminating measures in 2010-11?

Mr McDonald—There are a number of measures that are part of the budget process for reconsideration coming up on 10 May, and there are six measures that lapse on 30 June that are part of a government consideration at the moment. I can list them if you wish.

Senator NASH—We are short of time, so if you could take that on notice and provide them for me, thanks.

Mr McDonald—Yes.

Answer:

There are six drought assistance policies or measures that terminate on 30 June 2011.

The terminating policies or measures are:

- Policy authority for small businesses to continue to access Exceptional Circumstances (EC) assistance.
- Re-establishment assistance (also known as EC Exit Grants).
- EC Professional Advice and Planning Grants.
- Policy authority for the \$750 000 off-farm/non-business net assets exemption as part of the eligibility criteria for the EC Interest Rate Subsidy.
- Policy authority for the \$20 000 off-farm/non-business salary and wages offset as part of the eligibility criteria for the EC Relief Payment.
- Transitional Income Support.

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Question: 108

Division/Agency: CC - Climate Change Division

Topic: The Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia

Proof Hansard Page: 59 (21/02/2011)

Senator Back asked:

Senator BACK—My final question relates to the selection of those people who are actually delivering the program. You might be able to take it on notice. I am interested in knowing what their professional backgrounds have been; their experience, for example, in agribusiness; whether they are from regional areas or metropolitan areas. I also understand that there is a mentoring scheme, to mentor those who exit farming. I am interested in knowing what the skill base is of those who would be mentoring those who are exiting, but you may take that on notice.

Mr Noble—I can, if you wish. The program you refer to is called Beyond Farming. It is a program delivered by the WA Council of Social Service. They sought expressions of interest for people to become mentors, so former farmers to become mentors to current farmers. We can provide details about the selection process for those mentors, if you would like.

Answer:

Farm Planning

The Farm Planning program is funded and delivered by the Western Australian Government. The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA) engaged Curtin University as the program administrator. Curtin University maintains a pool of contracted facilitators to deliver the Farm Planning course modules.

These facilitators were engaged by Curtin University through a public call for expressions of interest, which required applicants to:

- demonstrate they satisfy one of the following:
 - completion of a relevant degree or Associate Diploma
 - hold a previous Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (BSZ40198)
 - hold a current Certificate IV in Training & Assessment (TAA40104) or specified competencies from that certificate, i.e.:
 - TAADES402A Design and Deliver Learning Programs
 - TAADEL401A Plan and Organise Group Based Delivery
 - TAADEL402A Facilitate Group Based Delivery
 - TAAASS401A Plan and Organise Assessment
 - TAAASS402A Assess Competence, or
 - possess other appropriate teaching qualifications or current equivalent relevant combination of experience in delivery of adult training and education

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- demonstrate a technical understanding and ability in facilitating/training in at least three of the following fields:
 - strategic planning
 - business planning
 - financial planning
 - production planning
 - family communications
 - self management
 - succession planning
 - contemporary rural social issues
 - climatic change management
 - risk management
 - scenario, futures and visioning
 - change management
- demonstrate links to grower and rural networks, and an ability to form, facilitate and hold groups together to learn.

Curtin University selected 68 facilitators to deliver the Farm Planning course modules. DAFWA estimates that fifty percent of the facilitators are based in regional Western Australia and the remainder come from metropolitan areas. The facilitators have backgrounds in professional facilitation, business coaching, farm management, financial management, agricultural consulting, climate / weather professions and natural resource management.

Beyond Farming

The Western Australian Council of Social Service Inc. (WACOSS) is delivering the Beyond Farming program on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. WACOSS sought expressions of interest from former farmers to become mentors. WACOSS received 93 enquiries and 31 formal expressions of interest, from which 20 mentors were selected and trained.

WACOSS selected mentors based on their skills and experiences, including whether:

- they have owned and operated an agricultural property anywhere in Australia within the past 10 years, but no longer do so
- they and their families had successfully moved out of farming into rewarding new work and/or life opportunities
- they were able to obtain police clearances
- they were able to attend two days of training
- they had good communication skills and an ability to develop rapport with farmers and a good understanding of the role
- they could possibly still be working in the agricultural industry in some capacity (other than owning or operating a farm) ; and

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- they were willing to share their story to interested farmers and to meet with them.

Selected mentors have experience in a range of agricultural industries in Western Australia, including beef, pigs, sheep, cropping, aquaculture, viticulture and horticulture. Selected mentors have farmed in the North East Agricultural, Northern, Central, Southern and South West agricultural regions of Western Australia.

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Division/Agency: CC - Climate Change Division

Topic: The Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia

Proof Hansard Page: 59 (21/02/2011)

Senator Siewert asked:

Senator SIEWERT—I do particularly want to follow up on the WA trial. Of the 19 applications for exit, you said three had been pre-approved. Is that correct?

Mr Noble—Yes.

Senator SIEWERT—You said no-one has actually exited, but three have been pre-approved.

Mr Noble—Yes. They have gone through a pre-assessment process where Centrelink has assessed their income and assets, and Centrelink has advised them that subject to selling their property based on the eligibility criteria, they would be eligible for an exit grant.

Senator SIEWERT—You said there are 19. Three have obviously been assessed. Where are the other 16 up to?

Mr Noble—I would need to take that on notice to find out where those applications are up to. The figure has increased quite a bit since early December, so I think a lot of those would be in the assessment process, but I can take that on notice to give you that detail.

Answer:

Status of Farm Exit Support applications

At 4 March 2011, 18 applications have been received for Farm Exit Support. (Centrelink has advised that the previously advised 19 applications was incorrect, due to double counting of one application.)

Of the 18 applications, 14 are applications for assessment subject to the farm enterprise being sold (pre-assessments) and four are applications for assessment after the farm has been sold (post-assessments).

Of the 14 pre-assessment applications:

- three have been pre-assessed as eligible, subject to selling their farm enterprise (one received in each of August, September and November 2010);
- five have been referred to a Centrelink Complex Assessment Officer for further consideration (four received in December 2010 and one received in January 2011); and
- six are awaiting the return of requested documentation from applicants to enable the assessments to be finalised (one received in November 2010, one in December 2010, three in January 2011 and one in February 2011).

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Of the four post-assessment applications:

- one has been paid (application received in November 2010 and payment made on 4 March 2011)
- one has been rejected due to failure to return requested documentation (application received in December 2010)
- two are awaiting the return of requested documentation from the applicants to enable the assessments to be finalised (one application received in February 2010 and one received in March 2011).

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Question: 110

Division/Agency: CC - Climate Change Division

Topic: The Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia

Proof Hansard Page: 60 (21/02/2011)

Senator Siewert asked:

Mr Noble—Sorry. The terms of reference will look at the efficiency, effectiveness, appropriateness, and preliminary outcomes of each of the pilot measures. The outcomes and objectives of the pilot are documented in the national partnership agreement for the pilot, and that has been publicly available since mid-last year.

Senator SIEWERT—I am interested in the criteria for evaluation that will be used — what they consider effective, et cetera. I am interested in the actual methodology of the evaluation.

Mr Noble—Okay.

Senator SIEWERT—Is that available?

Mr Noble—We can take that on notice and provide that information to the committee.

Senator SIEWERT—That would be appreciated, thank you. I am also interested in how that was developed, the background to it, who developed it and then what it is. Does that make sense?

Answer:

The objectives, outputs and outcomes for the pilot are defined in the National Partnership Agreement on the Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia (NPA) between the Australian and Western Australian Governments. The NPA was signed by the Prime Minister on 30 May 2010 and is available at www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/national_partnership_agreements/environment.aspx.

In accordance with the NPA, the performance reporting arrangements were agreed by the Pilot of Drought Reform Measures Working Group, which consists of representatives of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Centrelink.

The monitoring and reporting arrangements and progress against key performance indicators are summarised in the *Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia Progress Report* which is available on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot.

The review of the pilot of drought reform measures has commenced and the Drought Pilot Review Panel will report to government by 30 September 2011. The terms of reference for the review are available at www.daff.gov.au/droughtpilot.

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Question: 111

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Intensive Forest Management Program

Proof Hansard Page: 63 (21/02/2011)

Senator Milne asked:

Senator MILNE—Thank you, Chair. I want to go to forestry now, if I may, and I would like to start with the exit package, the \$17 million of Commonwealth money going to the exit package for forest contractors. I note that the DAFF fraud group has been in Tasmania in relation to this. Minister and/or whoever is the appropriate person in the department: were you aware of the longstanding concerns and criticisms of people in the parliament and the Auditor-General about the handling of Commonwealth grants to Tasmania in terms of forestry prior to setting up this particular grant round?

Mr Aldred—There has certainly been a range of audits in the past on a range of programs, so the department is aware of the outcomes of those audits.

Senator MILNE—And what were the outcomes of those audits?

Mr Aldred—I do not have the details of them here, Senator. I would have to take on notice the specifics of the audit that you are referring to and the department's response to it.

Senator MILNE—Would you agree that the Auditor-General, in writing the reports, suggested the department put in place measures to make sure the shortcomings were overcome?

Mr Aldred—Again, if the Auditor-General made recommendations and the department responded to those, then I would need to look at the details of the response.

Senator MILNE—Okay. Well, I can tell you the department said they would implement the Auditor-General's recommendations at the time. Moving on from there, under the Tasmanian community forest agreement grants program, Forestry Tasmania was given \$115 million from the Commonwealth for intensive forest management. It was paid upfront. Is the Commonwealth aware that Forestry Tasmania has used that money for its operating expenses?

Mr Aldred—As I understand it, there is a performance and financial audit underway on a range of past forestry programs and, from recollection, it is due to report in March. So I would take your comments in that context and follow up for you.

Senator MILNE—The Tasmanian Auditor-General noted that Forestry Tasmania had used Commonwealth funding for its operating expenses, and given its recent financial statements it appears not to have the money to be able to fulfil the obligations of the Commonwealth. Who in the Commonwealth actually engages and oversees how this money is being spent? Who in the department is responsible for that?

Mr Aldred—It sits within the forestry branch and so, from that point of view, rests with me. As I have said, I will take your points on notice and I will follow up on them.

Senator MILNE—That is fine, but can you explain to me why there is not a proactive oversight of how the Commonwealth's funds are being handled in the states and, in this case, in the state of Tasmania?

Mr Aldred—Perhaps I can clarify. I am not aware of the details of that. I will check what activity is underway.

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Answer:

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) undertook an audit of the Tasmanian Forest Industry Development Program, a sub project of the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement (TCFA) Industry Development Program, and a report was released in February 2008.

The ANAO made three recommendations:

- 1) the adoption of more effective reporting against the program outcome performance indicators
- 2) the tailoring of the department's standard funding deed to better reflect the nature of the programs, and
- 3) the development of operational guidelines to allow for the effective monitoring of compliance with funding deeds.

The department accepted these recommendations and has implemented changes to address the audit findings.

A review of the TCFA Intensive Forest Management program is yet to commence.

Under the TCFA, \$115 million was jointly committed by the Australian and Tasmanian governments to the intensive forest management program.

As specified in the agreement, the Australian Government contributed \$66 million from 2005–06 to 2007–08 towards the program's activities, with the remaining \$49 million being committed by the Tasmanian Government. The Tasmanian Government commissioned Forestry Tasmania to undertake the work.

Acquittals provided by the Tasmanian Government show that — up to the end of the 2007–08 financial year — when the Australian Government made its final contribution, Forestry Tasmania had spent more than \$76 million on intensive forest management activities. Up 30 June 2010, \$99.65 million has been acquitted and Forestry Tasmania indicates that it will retain the remaining funds as income in advance to be expended on future forest management, consistent with the program, over the coming 15 years.

While the Australian Government's contribution of \$66 million was acquitted in 2007–08, the government intends to continue working with the Tasmanian Government to ensure all intensive forest management funding is spent appropriately. The Tasmanian and Australian governments will commence a review of the program during 2010–11.

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Question: 112

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Community Forest Agreements – Use of Funds in Tasmania

Proof Hansard Page: 65 (21/02/2011)

Senator Milne asked:

Senator MILNE—Was it ever followed up whether, with the grants that were made in the first place, the machinery was ever used in Tasmania in the first place, or when the grants were made was it possible for those companies to buy the machinery, operate them in Victoria, apply for the money to get out of Tasmania and continue their Victorian operations on that cash?

Mr Aldred—I think we have follow-up reports on the grants issued under the former program. I am happy to take that on notice and chase it through, but I would expect so.

Answer:

All grantees funded under the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreements Industry Development Program (TCFA IDP) were required to submit milestone reports and proof of expenditure in relation to machinery purchased under the program. As outlined in the program guidelines, for eligibility, businesses had to demonstrate secure long-term access to a sufficient quantity and quality of forest products in Tasmania to undertake the proposal, for example through a timber supply contract for public native forest or hardwood plantation or through a similar arrangement from private plantation or native forest.

In addition, the TCFA IDP funding deeds contain an asset clause provision stipulating that if the Grantee, in the reasonable opinion of the Commonwealth, did not remain in business substantially the same as that for which the grant was provided, the Commonwealth could seek recovery of a proportion of funding. This clause was generally effective for a period of three years after the completion date of the project.

At the conclusion of each project under the TCFA IDP, grantees were required to submit a final report which provided information on how machinery purchased under a project had benefited the grantee's business in Tasmania.

Site inspections were also carried out on the majority of projects under the two TCFA IDP sub programs; the Tasmanian Forest Industry Development Program (TFIDP) and Tasmanian Softwood Industry Development Program (TSIDP) which supported the funding of machinery. In total, inspections were undertaken for 48 of 68 TFIDP projects and 14 of 17 TSIDP projects. These inspections confirmed the purchase and usage of machinery in Tasmania and their contribution to the objectives of the TFIDP and TSIDP.

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Question: 113

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Tasmanian Forest Contractors Package

Proof Hansard Page: 66-67 (21/02/2011)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—Can you give me—and you will have to do this on notice, I understand—full details of the consultation process that was undertaken in relation to the program. I already have some of that from Monday, 21 February 2011 previous discussions we have had, so I have that up to a certain date for some of the meetings and who was met with. That was provided on notice CC29, but could you give me a completion of that process up until when the details were finalised and finally announced.

Answer:

A Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry officer along with Tasmanian officials met on two occasions with forestry contractor and union representatives in Tasmania as part of the consultation process in developing the Tasmanian Native Forest Contractor Packages.

On 22 September 2010 a meeting was held with Mr Colin McCullough, Mr Ken Paget, Mr Rodney Bishop, Mr Travis Wacey and Mr Scott McQueen. Tasmanian officials at the meeting were Mr John Dawson, Mr Andrew Blakesley and Mr Kim Creak.

On 5 October 2010 a meeting was held with Mr Jack Lake, Mr Mick Stephens, Mr Col Shipley, Mr Colin McCulloch, Mr Ken Padgett and Mr Scott McQueen. Mr Kim Creak, a Tasmanian official, also attended the meeting.

Following the 5 October 2010 meeting no further face-to-face meetings occurred.

During October 2010 and November 2010 the department developed program guidelines in consultation with Tasmanian officials from the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources by telephone and email.

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Question: 114

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Forestry

Proof Hansard Page: 67 (21/02/2011)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK— Can you tell me what is happening with the other part of the funding package—that is, the assistance package.

Mr Aldred—That is being managed on behalf of the Commonwealth by the Tasmanian government. It was advertised just prior to Christmas and closed on 7 January. I understand that 56 offers were made under the support package and 46 payments have been made.

Senator COLBECK—Where would we access that information? It is Commonwealth money, but it is being managed by the state.

Mr Aldred—It is. We will get reports from the Tasmanian government about it but, if you have particular questions, I am happy to follow up.

Senator COLBECK—I am just interested in the generic information, I suppose in the similar way of what would be a reasonable reporting process. Can you give me a sense of the scope and scale of the payments?

Mr Aldred—A number in the order of \$100,000 to \$200,000. I will take it on notice and give you the broader scale.

Answer:

Grant funding was calculated based on an applicant's shortfall between their contracted and actual tonnage in the period between 1 January 2009 and 1 July 2010. Where applicants had one or more contracts, each contract was considered separately.

Under the scheme harvesting contractors were eligible for a grant of up to \$200 000 and haulage contracts were eligible for a grant of up to \$100 000. If a contractor was eligible for support under both the harvest and haulage aspects of the program the maximum grant available was \$300 000.

Grants varied between \$4000 and \$300 000 with the average grant being \$100 087.

At 28 March 2011, 53 offers have been paid.

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Question: 115

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Independent Facilitator for the Tasmanian Forests Statement of Principles Process

Proof Hansard Page: 67 (21/02/2011)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—Could you give us a list of stakeholders that Mr Kelty has met with. I will make a declaration now that I will be on that list at some stage in the proceedings. My understanding is Mr Kelty is doing this for no fee. That is as it is. What expenses are being incurred as part of this and who is carrying the tab for that?

Answer:

In addition to those organisations who are signatories to the Statement of principles the department understands Mr Kelty has met with the following people up to 20 February 2011

- The Hon. Lara Giddings MP and the Hon. David Bartlett MP —current and previous state premiers
- The Hon. Nick McKim MP — Tasmanian Government minister and Greens state leader, with four other attendees
- The Hon. Bryan Green MP — Tasmanian Government Deputy Premier, with his head of office, Gary Swain
- Rhys Edwards, Rod Scott and Greg Johannes — Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Bob Rutherford, Martin Blake, Andrew Blakesley — State Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources
- Jonathan West — Australian Innovation Research Centre
- Tim Woods — Fitzpatrick Woods Consulting
- Naomi Edwards — Australian Ethical Investment
- Bob Gordon, Simon Grove, Hans Drielsma — Forestry Tasmania
- Claire Ellis — Tourism Tasmania
- Fred Ralph and Steve Edwards — Tasmanian Country Sawmillers Federation
- George Harris — designer and furniture manufacturer
- Greg L'Estrange, Timo Piilonen and Wayne Chapman — Gunns Limited
- also visited McKay Timber in Glenorchy, Britton Brothers Mill in Smithton, Ta Ann in Smithton, Ta Ann in Huonville and met people on those sites, including Bernard McKay, Glenn Britton, Simon Kang and Paul Woolley.
- Charlie Zammit — Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

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Mr Kelty has met with Australian Government ministers for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; Innovation, Industry, Science and Research; Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government; and Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and officials from the departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities.

The Department understands Mr Kelty has also met with Senator Brown and Senator Colbeck since 21 February 2011.

The Departments of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities; Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government; and Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry will share the administrative costs of Mr Kelty including travel expenses and the salary and travel expenses for a part-time assistant.

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Question: 116

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Gunns Pulp Mill

Proof Hansard Page: 68 (21/02/2011)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—Have you had any specific discussions with the company on the mills since supplementary budget estimates?

Senator Ludwig—I would have to take that on notice. As part of the forest contracting package that we were just talking about, I do have a recollection of speaking to representatives. I am not sure whether they were representing Gunns at the time or whether they were representing haulage and harvesting contractors. That aside, since that date, I have not. But I will take it on notice just to make sure, and I will also check whether my office has, as well.

Answer:

On 22 November 2010, the Hon. Joe Ludwig, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry met with Mr Greg L'Estrange, Managing Director of Gunns Limited, and representatives of the Tasmanian Government and discussed general forestry issues. The mill proponents have not made a request of the minister or the department for funding in relation to the mill.

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Question: 117

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Wood Supply in Tasmania

Proof Hansard Page: 69-70 (21/02/2011)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Mr Aldred—The East Gippsland and Tasmanian regional forest agreements hit their 15 years in 2012. That is the point at which the agreements provide for determining a process for renewal, on expiry.

Senator COLBECK—With the Tasmanian one, which, as I understand it, is the only one legislated by both parliaments, what is the process for making significant changes to wood supply under that agreement?

Mr Aldred—Off the top of my head, there is a requirement for 300,000 cubic metres of class 1 and class 3 and that is legislated. I cannot recall all the clauses and so on, but I would expect that it would take legislative change. But in terms of the details, I would need to take that on notice.

Senator COLBECK—If you could, I would be interested to know what the processes would need to be. I suppose the only thing you could do would be to give us advice at a Commonwealth level, but perhaps you could also give me any information you can about what would have to happen with complementary legislation at the state level, because one of the driving factors for the current process in Tasmania is a significant hole in the wood supply which will start to appear about 2017 and manifest itself completely by about 2021. There will effectively be only 150,000 cubic metres of native forest timber available post that date. If that is going to be the case—and it appears to be one of the negotiating processes as part of this agreement that is being discussed in Tasmania at the moment—I would be interested to know what the provisions to actually give effect to that might be. Have you had any specific discussions with the Tasmanian government about that looming supply hole? It is effectively a large proportion of native forest that has been converted to plantation and the concern is that the product available, which is *nitens*, is not suitable for saw log supply.

...

Senator COLBECK—I would be interested in any information around that topic being made available. It is obviously something that you will have to take on notice, but it is certainly something that I am interested in having a look at, given some of the discussions that are occurring in Tasmania at the moment

Answer:

Clause 77 of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) recognises the public land target of 300 000 cubic metres of high quality sawlog/veneer log. This figure is formally recognised in Tasmanian legislation – Section 22AA of the *Forestry Act 1920*. If there were to be changes to this legislated figure, they would need to be amended under Tasmanian legislative processes. Any changes to such a legislated figure in the *Forestry Act 1920* would need an appropriate change to Clause 77 of the Tasmanian RFA. The Tasmanian RFA

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provides for variation of clauses based on the agreement of both the Australian and Tasmanian governments.

The Department has had no specific discussions with the Tasmanian Government about a “looming supply hole”.

As part of the Tasmanian RFA second five year review in 2007, Forestry Tasmania undertook a review of its sustainable high quality eucalypt sawlog supply from Tasmanian State Forests. Information about this review is available at - <http://www.forestrytas.com.au/sfm/sustainable-high-quality-eucalypt-sawlog-supply-from-tasmanian-state-forest>

We understand a response to recommendation 34 of the Independent Review for the Tasmanian RFA second five year review, Forestry Tasmania will continue to review and report on its sustainable high quality eucalypt sawlog supply from Tasmanian State Forests in 2012. Information about this review is available at: www.daff.gov.au/rfa/publications/annual-reports/tasmania/tasmania_rfa_second_five_yearly_review.

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Question: 118

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Forest Burns

Proof Hansard Page: 72 (21/2/2011)

Senator Bob Brown asked:

Senator BOB BROWN—I will not go further; that speaks for itself. I wanted to ask a question about forest burns, and this maybe would be best answered by Mr Mortimer. Is it your assessment that the greenhouse gas emissions from Tasmanian regeneration burns are less than the amount absorbed by forests under the aegis of Forestry Tasmania each year?

Mr Mortimer—That is a very specific question.

Senator BOB BROWN—Yes. I wanted to make it specific.

Mr Mortimer—I am not sure how to answer it. Ms Gaglia, is there anything we can say on that, or should we take it on notice?

Ms Gaglia—The Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency would be able to provide an answer to that because they actually have the modelling and estimation capacity that we do not. We would not be able to give you an answer to that.

Senator BOB BROWN—Could you also take on notice to look at forests which are not slated for potential logging and which are under the control of Forestry Tasmania? This of course excludes protected forests in national parks et cetera.

Answer:

The Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (DCCEE) is responsible for monitoring and reporting on Australia's greenhouse gas emissions through the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory (NGGI). DCCEE advises that the NGGI includes emissions and subsequent removals from forest management activities in native forests, including regeneration burns. DCCEE assess that nationally, emissions from regeneration fires are less than the total amount absorbed by forests which are available for harvest. However, this data is not able to be disaggregated by individual companies and therefore DCCEE is unable to provide estimates for Forestry Tasmania.

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Question: 119

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Plenty Link Road

Proof Hansard Page: 72-73 (21/02/2011)

Senator Bob Brown asked:

Senator BOB BROWN—...I have a question about the Plenty link road, which goes between the New Norfolk region and the Judbury region at the back of Mount Wellington in Tasmania and which is exclusively used by logging interests and prohibits access by members of the public and the tourist industry. How much Commonwealth money went into establishing that road?

Mr Aldred—I will have to take that on notice. You said New Plenty Road?

Senator BOB BROWN—The Plenty link road.

Mr Aldred—Plenty link road.

Senator BOB BROWN—Would you establish what representations the Commonwealth has made to give public access to this high-quality, all-weather road; for example, for tourism?

Finally on that matter, would you look at the immediate plans to log next to that road in a way which does not take into account its future tourism amenity? I am talking about on the south decline of that road where there are a number of quite massive clear fells but no screening and no effort to retain the natural beauty of the landscape. Thank you for that.

Mr Aldred—I will take that on notice, Senator. I may come back and say that is a matter for Forestry Tasmania and the state government.

Senator BOB BROWN—Then I will come back and may say, ‘That’s if there’s no federal funding involved.’

Mr Aldred—And that is why I am pleased to take it on notice, Senator.

Senator BOB BROWN—Are you aware, by the way, of proposals I and the residents of the West Wellington Protection Group have been involved in, for a walking track from Hobart along the Wellington Range to the Snowy Range and potentially into the Weld and Styx valleys and, if so, could you take on notice what impact proposed logging on the Wellington Range may have in compromising that option?

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry through its programs has not committed any funding for the Plenty Link Road.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has not made any representations on the Plenty Link road to the Tasmanian Government.

Forestry Tasmania provides a Three Year Wood Production Plan on its website (www.forestrytas.com.au/forest-management/3yp) which lists the hardwood and softwood coupes scheduled for harvesting and road construction by district. The Australian Government does not manage coupes at the operational forest management level nor does it provide advice to state agencies on prescriptions for harvesting or the working order for harvesting of coupes.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Question: 119 (continued)

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is unaware of the proposed walking track.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 120

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Illegal Logging

Proof Hansard Page: 73 (21/02/2011)

Senator Brown asked:

Senator BOB BROWN—...The reference to legislation to prevent the import of illegally logged timbers; is the department aware of a current people's blockade against logging at Vanimo in Papua New Guinea where residents believe their rights have been totally overridden? And what does the government do about internal corruption which effectively means that illegal logging under national laws are given permits by people in corrupt processes? Will such logging materials be prevented entry into Australia under this slate of legislation?

Answer:

The department is not aware of a current people's blockade against logging at Vanimo Papua New Guinea.

The government's illegal logging policy considers that timber has been legally logged if it is harvested in compliance with the laws in force in the place (whether or not in Australia) where the timber was harvested.

It is proposed in the legislation to prohibit the importation of illegally logged timber and timber products.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 121

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Forest Protest in Bodalla SF

Proof Hansard Page: 73-74 (21/02/2011)

Senator Brown asked:

Senator BOB BROWN—Finally, are you aware of a copy in the current issue of the *Narooma News* that approximately 10 days ago a young woman was on a platform protesting against the destruction of forests near Bermagui, and police were called to that operation. Other people at the protest left at their direction, but she remained there. Police then left, according to this story, that area and at night thugs came and cut down the tree in which she was stationed, under searchlight, and she was left in this extraordinarily fearful situation by the activity of those thugs. And if you are not aware of it, would you get what information you can about that incident and report it back to the committee and see what measures are taken to—

Mr Aldred—Senator, on that one, no, I am not aware of it. But I believe that is a matter for the police and for the state government.

Senator BOB BROWN—No, it is also a matter for the logging processes taking place down there. But would you take on notice and see if the department has any information about that incident?

Mr Ludwig—Senator Brown, we will see what we can do in terms of this department but, at first instance, with something serious like that, I hope that you or the young person involved has reported it to the police to take appropriate action in that area. It does seem very serious, quite frankly.

Senator BOB BROWN—It is in the *Narooma News*, Minister, so I presume the police are taking action.

Mr Ludwig—Yes.

Senator BOB BROWN—Whether there is information about it is a matter for this department, and I am asking if—

Mr Ludwig—And I said we will take on notice what we can to see what involvement we have in that issue

Answer:

The department has no role in the matter and understands it has been reported to the NSW Police.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 122

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Forestry Budgets & Spending 2006 - 2010

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What is the budget and spending, including consultancies, for the forestry division of DAFF for the 5 years from 2006 to 2010 inclusive?

Answer:

The budget and spending for Forestry Branch for the 5 year period 2006 to 2010 inclusive are:

| Year | Total Budget | Total Expenditure | Departmental (including consultancies) | Departmental programs ¹ |
|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| | millions of dollars | | | |
| 2005/2006 | 8.3 | 7.5 | 4.0 | 3.5 |
| 2006/2007 | 8.6 | 7.4 | 4.6 | 2.8 |
| 2007/2008 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 4.6 | 0.7 |
| 2008/2009 | 5.7 | 5.4 | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| 2009/2010 | 4.1 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 0.5 |

1. Departmental programs include elements of the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement and the Asia Pacific Skills Initiative that were funded from departmental appropriation, these figures do not include programs funded through administered funds.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 123

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Staffing and Qualifications 2006 - 2010

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What are the professional staffing levels for the forestry division of DAFF by year for the 5 years from 2006 to 2010 inclusive? How many of these have professional forestry qualifications?

Answer:

There is no requirement for staff to hold or identify professional forestry qualifications. As such records are not held.

Through enquiry of 25 current staff, 24 hold tertiary qualifications, 5 of whom hold professional forestry.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 124

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Managed Investment Schemes

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

Since the collapse of major Australian companies offering forestry MIS products in 2009/10, what initiatives or policy review has been carried out by DAFF to address the dramatic reduction in plantation establishment in Australia?

Answer:

The department commissioned ABARES to provide an overview of government instruments and mechanisms that may be used to encourage investment in forest plantations through a publication released in May 2010 titled *Models for a sustainable plantation industry: a review of policy alternatives* and available on the ABARES website (http://adl.brs.gov.au/data/warehouse/pe_abarebrs99014450/Forest_invest.pdf).

A complementary research project on alternative means of raising funds for plantation expansion is being prepared by Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA), and the department has been part of the steering committee for this project.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 125

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Regional Forest Agreements

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

The Regional Forest Agreements between the Commonwealth and most State Governments established in the mid to late 1990s, with major oversight by DAFF were due for policy review at 5 yearly intervals thereafter. What has DAFF done to initiate such reviews and provide advice to Government about any such reviews? What is the status and timeframes of these reviews?

Answer:

In Tasmania the first and second five-year reviews have been completed with reviewers' reports tabled in Parliament. A whole-of-government response to the second five-year reviewer's recommendations was tabled in Parliament in January 2010. The next review in Tasmania is due in 2012.

In Victoria a combined first and second five-year review was completed in 2009 with the reviewers report tabled in Parliament in September 2010. For the purposes of a combined review, all five Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) were combined for reporting purposes. A whole-of-government response is currently under development. The third five-year review is due in 2014.

In New South Wales the first five-year review was undertaken in 2009. The reviewer's report was tabled in Parliament in March 2010. For the purposes of a combined review, the three RFAs were combined for reporting purposes. A whole-of-government response is currently under development. The second five-year review is due in 2011.

Western Australia is currently undertaking a combined first and second five year review to be conducted during 2011.

All reports for the Tasmanian, New South Wales and Victorian five-yearly reviews are available on the department's website (www.daff.gov.au/rfa/publications/annual-reports) and on state government websites.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 126

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: World Forestry Congress

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. Was Australia represented by DAFF at the World Forestry Congress in 2009?
2. If not, why not, when the FAO, as advised to forestry interests in Australia, was seeking for Australia to host the next World Forestry Congress?

Answer:

- 1 & 2. Australia was represented at the World Forestry Congress in 2009 by an official from the Australian Embassy in Argentina.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 127

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: World Forestry Congress

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What options has DAFF considered for hosting the next World Forestry Congress in Australia and what are the details of these – what options have been rejected or accepted and why?

Answer:

On 9 June 2010 the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Director General invited all FAO member countries to propose, by 1 September 2010 that they wished, to host the 14th World Forestry Congress.

A request to support a bid from the Melbourne World Forestry Congress Bid Committee was received by the department in late August 2010 outlining a proposed program of events and identifying approximately \$700 000 worth of support for the event.

The Australian Government did not submit the proposal to the FAO for consideration as the bid did not have adequate financial support by the closing date for submissions and no formal support had been offered by the Victorian Government.

The 14th World Forestry Congress was awarded to South Africa and will be held in 2015.

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Question: 128

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: United Nations Forum on Forests

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What representation have Australian forestry interests through DAFF or DAFF sponsored attendees, had at recent United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Conference of the Parties (COP – climate change) international meetings? Please provide details.

Answer:

A Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) officer attended the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York City, from 24 January to 4 February 2011.

No DAFF officers or individuals sponsored by DAFF attended the 16th Conference of the Parties (6th Conference of the Parties) serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Cancun, Mexico from 29 November to 10 December 2010.

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Question: 129

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Forestry Capacity Building in the Asia-Pacific

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

How much has DAFF spent on capacity building for forestry in the Asia-Pacific region in the past 5 years? What have been the outcomes of these programs?

Answer:

In the past five years the department funded 15 projects, with a combined value of \$2.1 million, under phase I of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Skills and Capacity Building Program.

The majority of funding was provided to initiatives for delivering hands-on training and training workshops aimed at improving skills and capacity in sustainable forest management and combating illegal logging.

The outcomes of phase I of the program are discussed in the report *Making headway with sustainable forest management to help combat climate change* available on the department's website at:

www.daff.gov.au/forestry/international/asia-pacific-forestry-program/forest-management-climate-change.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 130

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: National Forest Policy Statement 1992

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What is the present status of any review of the National Forest Policy Statement 1992?
2. How does the government intend to enable effective participation of key industry stakeholders in any review and what are the details of any funding for this?

Answer:

1. There is no review of the National Forest Policy Statement.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 131

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Students Numbers in the Forestry Industry

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. What assessment has DAFF undertaken of the numbers of students undertaking relevant courses for employment in the forestry industry?
2. Can DAFF provide any figures in relation to the present student numbers in relevant disciplines for employment in the forestry industry and a comparison over the past 5 years?
3. What information does DAFF have about skills development for the forestry industry and what action is DAFF taking?
4. What involvement has DAFF had in the tailoring of University and other courses to ensure that graduates have the skills required by industry?

Answer:

- 1, 2. and 4. DAFF does not have policy responsibility for the numbers of operational tertiary students undertaking studies in a given subject area or in curriculum development.
3. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has administered the 2007 election commitment of building a Forestry Industry Database. The database includes a model that has the capacity for modelling employment and skills requirements for the forestry industry through the use of wood flow statistics. The main source of information on skills development in the forestry industry is ForestWorks at the Industry Skills Council.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 132

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Illegal Logging Code and Business Costs

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

In relation to illegal logging:

1. The literature made available so far indicates the Government will rely on a co-regulation approach that will require industry to shoulder much of the work developing the Code of Conduct under which timber will be brought to market. With this in mind:
 - a. How does the Department envisage industry developing this code of conduct and what mechanisms will be established to ensure all elements of the industry have a say in such matters?; and
 - b. How will industry conflicts of interest be managed?
2. The Regulatory Impact Scheme mentions that small businesses will be exempt from the illegal logging regulations.
 - a. What size threshold must be crossed before a business will be covered by these rules?
 - b. If no answer is available, when will the Department have an answer?
3. The literature mentions that at this point it is envisaged that verification will occur at the point timber enters the market. We understand the definition of point of entry for domestically produced timber is the primary processor. This may add extra costs to operators; particularly those that purchase their resource from small farm forests or private native forests.
 - a. Has the department conducted any work to ascertain the increased costs such operators will be faced with?
 - b. If yes, what will these added costs be and what actions does the Department plant to take to mitigate them to minimise costs to Australian business; or
 - c. If the Department cannot answer the question or has not done the work, why not?
4. The ABARE report into *the economic consequences of restricting the import of illegally logged timber* envisages employment losses in the industry.
 - a. Can the Department inform this committee on what it sees being the impact of its proposed model on employment in the industry?
 - b. If job losses are predicted:
 - i. What is the estimated size of the job losses;
 - ii. In which segments of the industry and if possible, their geographic location;
 - iii. What does the Department intend to do to mitigate job losses, or lessen their impact on effected communities?

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Question: 132 (continued)

Answer:

1.
 - a. The department will convene a working group of representatives from key industry organisations, business enterprises, and non-government organisations to provide commentary and feedback on a code of conduct and other aspects of the legislation. The department will also hold stakeholder seminars and use its website to keep stakeholders informed of progress.
 - b. A process to manage industry conflicts of interest will form part of the codes of conduct.
2.
 - a. No specific size threshold has been determined for application of the illegal logging legislation.
 - b. Any policy decision in this regard will be considered in developing subordinate legislation.
3.
 - a. The department commissioned a Small Business Impact Statement (*Illegal logging policy - Small Business Impact Statement* Cailum Pty Ltd, March 2010) in the development of the illegal logging policy. The report identifies the categories and number of businesses that may be affected by the policy and possible impacts on these businesses. The report is available on the department's website (www.daff.gov.au/illegallogging).
 - b. The report has estimated impacts on small business in a generalised way.
 - c. N/A
4.
 - a. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) report *The economic consequences of restricting the import of illegally logged timber*, estimates that overall changes in employment will be negligible even under the most stringent policy scenario.
 - b. N/A.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 133

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Illegal Logging Consultation

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. Who represented the Department at the recent information sessions about the new illegally logged timber policy, held in Sydney and Brisbane in early February 2011?
2. Did the Minister attend any of these sessions?
3. If not, was the Minister represented by others? If so, who?
4. Did staff from the Minister's office attend?
5. What were the attendance numbers at each session?
6. Was a list of representative groups or individuals recorded as attendees, and is this publicly available?
7. Can the Department supply a list of all stakeholders consulted thus far, including dates and locations, with regard to the development of this policy?
8. Has the Department consulted with relevant State Government departments and forestry managers?
9. Are the States fully informed and working with the Commonwealth on this matter?
10. What consultation has taken place with Australian suppliers, such as saw millers, private forestry resource owners, and other affected small-medium enterprises?
11. Has the Department conducted any analysis of the cost and impact of the regulation on suppliers of domestic timber? What is indicated in terms of cost of compliance?
12. When it is expected that the Government will introduce the legislation?

Answer:

1. The following officers represented the department at the illegal logging policy stakeholder information seminar held in Sydney on 7 February 2011:
 - John Talbot, General Manager, Forestry Branch
 - James Hoare, Policy Officer, Forestry Branch
 - Tom Keary, Policy Officer, Forestry BranchThe following officers represented the department at the illegal logging policy stakeholder information seminar held in Brisbane on 9 February 2011:
 - John Talbot, General Manager, Forestry Branch
 - Tony Nicholson, Policy Officer, Forestry Branch
 - Chris Powell, Policy Officer, Forestry Branch
2. Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, did not attend the illegal logging policy stakeholder information seminars.
3. The Minister was not represented by others at the illegal logging policy stakeholder information seminars.

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Question: 133 (continued)

4. Staff from the office of the Minister, did not attend the illegal logging policy stakeholder information seminars.
5. Sydney 31, Brisbane 22.
6. Yes. See 7 below.
7. Since the policy was announced in December 2010 the department has met with the stakeholders listed in the table below. This includes attendance at the information seminars held in Melbourne and Sydney on 7 February 2011 and Brisbane on 9 February 2011.

| Stakeholder | Organisation | Date | Location |
|--|---|------------------|---|
| Warwick Ragg and Gavin Matthew | Australian Forest Growers (AFG) and Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council (A3P) | 23 December 2010 | DAFF central office, Canberra |
| Jeremy Tager and Reece Turner | Greenpeace | 28 January 2011 | DAFF central office, Canberra |
| Warwick Ragg and Moira Goddard | AFG | 31 January 2011 | DAFF central office, Canberra |
| Gavin Matthew | A3P | 31 January 2011 | DAFF central office, Canberra |
| John Halkett | Australian Timber Importers Federation | 1 February 2011 | Sydney |
| Bronwyn Foord and Juel Briggs | Window and Door Industry Council and Briggs Veneers | 1 February 2011 | Sydney |
| Steve Nicholson and Chris Fry | Solaris Paper | 23 February 2011 | DAFF central office, Canberra |
| Forestry and Forest Products Committee (composed of representatives of the relevant state governments and state forestry agencies) | | 28 February 2011 | DAFF central office, Canberra Phone conference |
| 7 February 2011 Melbourne seminar | | | |
| Travis Wacey | Australian Council of Trade Unions – Construction Forest & Mining and Energy Union | | |
| Sophie Gebhart | Australian Forest & Timber News | | |
| David Drane | Australian Forest Contractors Association | | |
| Kayt Watts | Australian Forestry Certification Scheme | | |
| Terry Franklin | Decorative Wood Veneers Association | | |
| Lesia Mionnet | ForestWorks | | |
| Rohan Wright | Furnishing Industry Association of Australia VIC/TAS | | |
| Andrew Bone | Geo. J. Bone and Sons Pty Ltd | | |
| Nils Koren | Gunnersens | | |
| Nils Gunnersen | Gunnersens | | |
| Madeleine Swan | ITS Global | | |
| Peter Mathews | Mathews Timber | | |
| Michael Moorhead | Meyer Timber Pty Ltd | | |

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Question: 133 (continued)

| 7 February 2011 Melbourne seminar (continued) | |
|--|---|
| David Caroselli | Porta Mouldings |
| Andrew Taylor | SCA Hygiene Australasia |
| Steve Emmet | Simmonds Lumber |
| Glyn Davies | Simmonds Lumber |
| Robert Cairns | Tasman KB Pty Ltd |
| Peter Roberts | Timber Merchants Association |
| Ron Caddy | Timber Merchants Association |
| Helen Hatty | Timber Trader News |
| Cath James | Uniting Church |
| Blair Freeman | URS |
| Nathan Trushell | VicForests |
| Shaun Ratcliff | Victorian Association of Forest Industries |
| Andrew Rouse | World Wide Fund for Nature |
| 7 February 2011 Sydney Seminar | |
| Gavin Matthew | A3P |
| John Halkett | ATIF |
| Norman Long | ATIF |
| David Bird | Australian Wood Panels Association |
| Steve Dadd | Boral Timber |
| Ron Gattone | Crescent Timber and Hardware |
| Juel Briggs | Briggs Veneers |
| Richard Howarth | Environmental Defenders Office |
| Dean Brakell | Furnishing Industry Association of Australia |
| Martin Lewis | Furnishing Industry Association of Australia VIC/TAS |
| Phil Montgomery | GHD |
| Reece Turner | Greenpeace |
| Don Begway | JELD-WEN |
| Ross Duggan | Kimberley Clarke |
| Campbell McInnes | McInnes International |
| Chris White | Moxon Timber |
| Grant Johnson | National Association of Forest Industries |
| Pamela McAuley | NSW Government Department of Environment, Climate Change and Wate |
| Joanna Pojkowska | NSW Government Department of Environment, Climate Change and Wate |
| Michael Brown | Simmonds Lumber |
| Jack Forbes | Simmonds Lumber |
| Chris Fry | for Solaris Paper |
| Glenn Johnston | Stockwells Joinery Pty Ltd |
| Mike Swan | Swan Le Messurier |
| Ian Ramsay | Timbeck Cedar Products |
| Darren Jones | Timber and Building Materials Association Australia |
| Tony Wade | Timber Communities Australia |
| Steve Mitchell | Timber Development Association NSW |
| Bronwyn Foord | WADIC |
| Armineh Mardirossian | Woolworths Limited |
| Lydia Gaskell | World Wide Fund for Nature |

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Question: 133 (continued)

| 9 February 2011 Brisbane seminar | |
|---|--|
| Dave Alcock | Asian Pacific Timber Marketing |
| Gerry Gardiner | Asian Pacific Timber Marketing |
| Robyn Grey | Centor holdings |
| Maria Maher | Centor holdings |
| Curly Tatnell | Dale and Meyers Pty Ltd |
| Nigel Martin | Dale and Meyers Pty Ltd |
| Brock Hattmann | Dale and Meyers Pty Ltd |
| Marion Millard | Dale and Meyers Pty Ltd |
| Kate Melzer | Hurford Hardware |
| Michael Lloyd | Hyne |
| Ross Garsden | NCS International Pty Ltd |
| Mal Goatham | Pacific Wood Products Pty Ltd |
| Emma Franks | Parkside Group |
| Earl Murray | Proveneer Pty Ltd |
| Doug Bartlett | Queensland Timber Importers, Exporters and Wholesalers Association |
| Karen Johnston | Timber & Building Material Association Queensland |
| Jim Bowden | Timber & Forestry e-news |
| Jim Burgess | Timber Queensland Limited |
| David Lazarides | Timbersales Brisbane |
| Joe Chapman | TLB Timber |
| Chris Woodhouse | Woodhouse Timber |
| Chris Wilson | API |

8. Yes, see 7 above.
9. The Commonwealth will continue to consult the states on the implementation of the illegal logging policy. The government's policy intent on restricting the importation of illegally logged timber has been on the public record since 2007.
10. Refer to 7 and 9 above.
11. A series of reports underpinning the government's illegal logging policy was released on 9 December 2010. The reports were:

A final Regulation Impact Statement

- The final Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) assesses the potential costs and benefits for domestic business, individuals and the Australian economy of regulatory options designed to restrict the importation of illegally logged timber into Australia. It also identifies a preferred option.

The economic consequences of restricting the import of illegally logged timber

- Developed by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, this report uses a series of scenarios to examine the potential economic consequences of Australia restricting imports of illegally logged timber and timber products. The report builds on the work completed in the draft RIS and final report to inform the RIS.

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Question: 133 (continued)

The small business impact statement

- The small business impact statement categorises the structure and nature of small businesses operating within the Australian forest products industry. It identifies the categories and number of businesses that may be affected by the policy and possible impacts on these businesses. The report notes limitations in identifying the number of businesses affected by a policy intervention.

A review of the social costs of illegal logging

- This report focuses on the impacts which illegal logging have on forest dependent communities in producer countries. It identifies and describes some of the social costs of illegal logging in producer countries, indicating that forest dependent communities are often more vulnerable to impacts given their typically lower socio-economic status relative to urban communities.

○

A generic code of conduct to guide procurement of legally logged wood-based forest products

- The code describes a due diligence framework for industry. It provides guidance on completing risk assessment of the legality of the legal origins of timber products and the selection of suitable systems and schemes for verifying the legal origins of timber products that can effectively address the identified risks.

A framework for differentiating legality verification and chain of custody schemes

- This report provides guidance to industry on how it can differentiate between the available systems of legality verification based on the scheme requirements, governance processes and independence of compliance auditing procedures.

A risk assessment framework for assessing the legality of timber and wood products imported into Australia

- This project examined methods to estimate the value of illegally harvested timber being imported. The report proposes a risk assessment model whereby systems of forestry governance in timber producing countries are evaluated and linked to corruption indices.

12. The government has released an exposure draft and aims to introduce the legislation in the Winter session of 2011.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 134

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Softwood Plantations

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. Can DAFF provide details of its strategy to expand the softwood plantation estate to provide for future timber requirements and to reduce imports?
2. What action is presently being undertaken or planned?

Answer:

1. Land management is a state and territory responsibility. Since the 1990s the role of the Australian Government in plantation policy has been through Plantations for Australia: the 2020 Vision, a partnership between the Australian Government, state and territory governments and industry.

The 2020 Vision was released in 1997 and has underpinned plantation development with an aim of achieving 3 million hectares of plantations by 2020. Up to 2009 the 2020 Vision has supported the doubling of the plantation estate to 2.02 million hectares.

Source: Australia's Forests at a Glance 2010 (data to 2009)

2. Forest and Wood Products Australia, which is jointly funded by the Forest Industry and the Australian Government, has commissioned a report on *Policies and Investment Models for Continued Plantation Investment in Australia*. The report is expected to be completed in early 2011. The Forest and Wood Products Australia report builds on a report written by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences *Models for a sustainable forest plantation industry: a review of policy alternatives* released in May 2010 (www.abare.gov.au/publications_html/forestry/forestry_10/Forest_invest.pdf).

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Question: 135

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Value Adding Domestic Forest Products

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. Can DAFF provide details of its strategy to increase the amount of domestic value adding to forest products to create employment in Australia rather than exporting raw materials?
2. What action is presently being undertaken or planned?

Answer:

1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) is administering the Forest Industries Development Fund which is a competitive grants program to boost the international competitiveness of Australia's forest products. DAFF also provides significant funding to Forests and Wood Products Australia (FWPA) to undertake research and development that promotes internationally competitive and environmentally sustainable practices.
2. The Forest Industries Development Fund encouraged increased investment in measures designed to add value to our forest resources domestically rather than exporting raw material. Through this initiative the Australian Government worked with the states, territories and industry, to support the long-term economic viability of Australia's forest industries. Under the Forest Industries Development Fund, 20 projects received approval for funding support. Eight projects have now been completed. The program finishes in June 2011.

The Australian Government supports FWPA through the collection of levies from industry and a matching co-contribution to FWPA's research and development program. A core premise of FWPA's research and development program is helping the forest industry to increase the market share and value of its products, while improving the sustainability and economic contribution of the sector to the overall Australian community.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 136

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Sawn Hardwood and Softwood Production

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

Can the Department provide data for sawn hardwood and sawn softwood production by state for 2008-09 and 2009-10, and also any data already available for 2010-11?

Answer:

Data on Australia's sawn wood production is contained in the *Australian forest and wood products statistics* report which is released every six months by the the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES). The latest publication released in November 2010 contains national production figures for 2008–09 which are below (state estimates are not available for 2008–09). ABARES has advised that the 2009–10 figures will be released in May 2011. Figures for 2010–11 are not yet available.

Sawn production

| Year | 2008–09 |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Hardwood | 990 000 m ³ |
| Softwood | 3 740 000 m ³ |

Source: ABARE 2010, Australian forest and wood products statistics, September and December quarters 2009, Canberra, May 2010.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 137

Division/Agency: CC - Climate Change Division

Topic: The Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

In light of recent natural disasters in Australia, has the Department undertaken any work to investigate the possibility of establishing a national multi-peril insurance fund to enable farmers to mitigate risk?

Answer:

No. The Australian Government funded a study undertaken by Ernst and Young on Multi-Peril Crop Insurance in 2000, which found that Multi-Peril Crop Insurance schemes are not viable in Australia without large government subsidies. A copy of the final report was provided to the Committee in October 2010.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 138

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Department Activities Relating to the Private Forest Industry in Tasmania

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

What work is the Department undertaking or planning to support a sustainable future for the private forest industry in Tasmania and to ensure private forest assets are not devalued as the Tasmanian forest industry restructures?

Answer:

On 7 December 2010 the Prime Minister the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP announced that in response to the *Tasmanian forests Statement of Principles to Lead to an Agreement* the Australian Government would:

- 1) work with the Tasmanian Government to undertake an initial due diligence assessment of the Tasmanian forest industry in light of the Principles
- 2) with the Tasmanian Government, jointly appoint an independent facilitator to work with the signatories to the agreement as an honest broker to help build an implementation plan for the Principles
- 3) endorse the initial moratorium agreed between the parties on further logging in specific areas while the process of due diligence and further development of the implementation of the principles continues.

As well as administering the contract for the facilitator, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is undertaking due diligence measures in partnership with the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science and Research and the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government. These measures will ensure all parties have a strong understanding of:

- the extent of renewable resource available
- the sustainable size of the industry in the future, particularly given the changes in the market for Tasmanian timber products
- detail and definitions contained in the Statement of Principles including High Conservation Value forests
- the social and economic impact on communities in Tasmania.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 139

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Timber Imports

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

1. What was the quantity of timber and timber product imported into Australia last year?
2. How much of the timber or timber product originated in PNG? How much in Indonesia?
3. Are there currently any requirements as part of the procurement policy that ensure the timber is:
 - a) Legal?
 - b) Sustainable?

Answer:

1. In 2009–10 Australia imported \$4.2 billion in timber and timber products. This figure is derived from the *Australian forest and wood products statistics – March and June quarters 2010* published by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences.
2. Australia imported timber and timber products worth \$351.2 million directly from Indonesia and \$4.1 million directly from PNG (Source: *Australian forest and wood products statistics – March and June quarters 2010*). Data is only collected on the country of export, not origin.
3. There are no current requirements to ensure that imported timber is legal or sustainable. The Australian Government announced its policy to combat illegal logging and associated trade on 9 December 2010. The Australian Government will introduce legislation in 2011 that will:
 - establish a prohibition on the importation of illegally logged timber products
 - prepare the way for industry to develop necessary legality verification procedures, such as codes of conduct.

The government has circulated an exposure draft of the legislation.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 140

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Exceptional Circumstances

Proof Hansard Page: Written (21/02/2011)

Senator Williams asked:

As part of the deliberation for the Delungra EC application, data was used from two sample farms.

1. In what part of the application area are those farms?
2. When and at what intervals is this data collected?
3. The application prepared by Industry and Investment indicates there are 400 farms in the applied-for area. Data collected from two sample farms represents just .005% of the total number. How is this reflective of an area of 270,000 hectares?

Answer:

1. Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) advises that one sample farm is located in the central portion of the application area and the second in the eastern portion. Under the data confidentiality agreements with farms in ABARES surveys, the specific location of individual sample farms cannot be revealed.
2. Australian Agricultural and Grazing Industries Survey data is usually collected by ABARES twice each year. Estimates for the financial year are collected during November and February, and final data for the financial year is collected in the following July to October period. The information for the Delungra region was collected in November 2009.
3. The Australian Agricultural and Grazing Industries Survey is designed to be population representative at a broad regional level. The Delungra EC application area included a small part of two larger regions for which the survey is designed. The two farms are not a statistically representative sample of the population of farms in the application area and no claim to this effect is made in the ABARES advice provided to the National Rural Advisory Council (NRAC). Data for these two farms was included in the ABARES report to NRAC to support its assessment of the Delungra application and to provide further information on the current financial performance of farms in the Delungra area. It is usual for ABARES to include available survey information in advice on applications to NRAC to provide different financial performance information to that provided in applications by the state agencies and to address data gaps.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 141

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Forest Certification Schemes

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Colbeck asked:

1. Has the Department provided any advice to the Minister with regard to the forest certifications schemes available for use in Australia? If so, on how many occasions?
2. The DAFF website contains the following statement:

“The Australian Government supports all credible internationally recognised forest certification schemes that provide for legal and sustainable forest management and believes that the choice of forest certification scheme(s) is a decision for forest owners/managers.

Is the Department aware of any move away from this position with regard to choice of schemes being a decision for forest owners and managers?

3. Does the proposed legislation relating to illegally logged timber contain any specifications with regard to forest certification schemes? If yes, in what context and with what consequence?

Answer:

1. The department has provided advice to the Minister on certification schemes in Australia on one occasion.
2. The department is not aware of any move away from the position that certification systems are the choice for forest owners/managers. On 21 March 2011, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig, said:

“Australia is fortunate to have some of the best managed forests in the world. However, conveying the sustainability of Australian forest products has been hampered by differences in certification systems.

“Third party certification has become a market requirement. I acknowledge the Australian forest industry has invested both time and resources in the two certification schemes. I hope the industry uses the opportunity presented by the current review of the Australian Forestry Standard to take steps that work towards mutual recognition. Not because one standard is superior to another, but because market forces are driving that outcome.”

3. The draft legislation relating to illegally logged timber does not contain any specifications with regard to forest certification schemes. An exposure draft of the legislation is subject to an inquiry of the Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 142

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: WA Drought Pilot

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

With regards to the Western Australia Drought Pilot Project, Why is it that a farm business cannot be receiving Exceptional Circumstances interest rate subsidies in any financial year that it is receiving funding under the Building Farm Business programme?

Answer:

Schedule D Clause 4 of the National Partnership Agreement on the Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in Western Australia between the Australian and Western Australian Governments specifies that farm enterprises will not be eligible for Exceptional Circumstances Interest Rate Subsidies (ECIRS) in any financial year in which they have accessed or will access Building Farm Businesses program funding.

This reflects agreement of the Western Australian Government to not pursue an Exceptional Circumstances (EC) declaration for the region in which the WA pilot measures are available and being tested. Allowing ECIRS in the event of a subsequent EC declaration would be both inconsistent with the provision of Building Farm Businesses grants and amount to “double-dipping”.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 143

Division/Agency: CC - Climate Change Division

Topic: Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in WA – Stronger Rural Communities Program

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Given that one of the key performance indicators of the Stronger Rural Communities Program is the construction of social capital of the community and increased resilience to significant hardship; how does the agency measure their performance in this regard?

Answer:

The Stronger Rural Communities program aims to increase the capacity of rural communities experiencing significant hardship to build social capital, develop new and existing community networks and increase community resilience to the impacts of agricultural downturns.

Grant recipients are required to provide final reports for their projects by June 2011. The final reports will include information about how projects have facilitated new or enhanced community networks, facilities and/or events in their area. Grant recipients will also report on whether their projects increased the use of existing social networks and facilities. Progress towards the objectives will be considered as part of the review of the pilot.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 144

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Carbon Farming Initiative

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Has the agency finalised the rules for the Carbon Farming Initiative?

Answer:

Legislation for the Carbon Farming Initiative was introduced to Parliament on 24 March 2011.

The department worked closely with the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (DCCEE) to finalise the legislation, taking into account key issues raised by stakeholders during the consultation period.

The department will continue to work closely with DCCEE in developing regulations and the rules for governing offset projects (known as methodologies).

To assist in the assessment of methodologies a Domestic Offsets Integrity Committee has been established to provide independent advice to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 145

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Pilot of Drought Reform Measures in WA – Farm Planning

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Given that Curtin University believes that the actual delivery costs for Farm Planning courses are significantly above the \$6,000 allocation; How far over the \$6,000 allocation is the actual delivery cost, and who is meeting the shortfall?

Answer:

The Farm Planning program is funded and delivered by the Western Australian Government. The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA) has contracted Curtin University as the program administrator.

The contract between DAFWA and Curtin University contains a clause which allows an increase in the amount payable to Curtin University per farm business participating in the courses based on the submission of a business case by Curtin University. As at 8 March 2011, Curtin University has not submitted a business case. Any costs above the \$6000 per farm business will be borne by Curtin University until a business case is submitted and agreed by DAFWA.

DAFWA advises that Curtin University is yet to advise DAFWA of the final delivery costs of the program and is unlikely to do so until all the training has been completed.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 146

Division/Agency: CC – Climate Change Division

Topic: Farm Exit Support Scheme

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Has there been further interest in the Exit Support scheme for farmers?

Answer:

As at 4 March 2011, 18 applications have been received for Farm Exit Support grants under the pilot of drought reform measures in Western Australia.