

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL — GOVERNMENT PRINTING

6208. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Finance

I refer to the submission made by Picton Press to the Department of Environment and Conservation and members of Parliament in September 2012 regarding Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accreditation in relation to government printing procurement, and I ask —

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the environmental damage which can result from inappropriate management of timber harvesting for paper production?
- (2) Does the Minister support the statement from the sustainability and governance section of the State Sustainability Strategy that ‘All government departments should be taking the lead to improve their economic, social and environmental performance in a demonstrable manner’?
- (3) If yes to (2), does the Minister agree that FSC accreditation provides an assurance that the printing thus being carried out is performed using paper obtained from sustainably managed forests?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) If yes to (3), can the Minister explain why FSC accreditation is not a requirement for printers tendering for government work?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

- (1)–(2) Yes.
- (3) It is acknowledged that FSC accreditation provides a level of assurance that paper used in printing is obtained from sustainably managed forests.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Government has demonstrated leadership in this area through requiring FSC accreditation or equivalent in two whole-of-government printing and paper related common use arrangements. However, given the many different methods by which government may procure printing work, it is not feasible to mandate FSC accreditation. Raising greater awareness of environmentally related accreditations/certifications and encouraging, rather than mandating, their adoption is the preferred approach at this time.