

JARRAH FORESTS — LOGGING DEBRIS

689. Hon Lynn MacLaren to the Minister for Agriculture and Food representing the Minister for Forestry:
- (1) Is the Minister aware of leftover tinder-dry debris from Jarrah saw-logging that occurred in 2010 at Ashendon coupe 2?
 - (2) If yes to (1), can the Minister identify how many tonnes of debris were left behind?
 - (3) Can the Minister explain the dangers of leftover debris left on forest floors?
 - (4) What is the Department of Parks and Wildlife doing to remove the debris from the forest floor?

Hon Ken Baston replied:

- (1) As a result of timber harvesting activity, any unsaleable material resulting from the production of forest products is left in the forest.
- (2) The quantities of forest debris remaining on the forest floor after harvesting is not measured at each location harvested as it is not practical or necessary to do so.
- (3) It is recognised that the debris from harvesting activity has the potential to increase forest fuel levels. It is for this reason that efforts are continually made to increase the utilisation and sale of timber residues to minimise the quantity remaining.

Harvesting areas are planned in a manner that results in a dispersal of coupes to avoid a concentration of potentially increased fuel loads. The coupes themselves are also planned to be relatively small to again minimise risk of increased fuel loads over large areas.

To allow harvesting activity to proceed, roads and tracks are either upgraded or constructed to access the coupes. This activity is planned and improves forest access and effectively creates fire breaks in the forest to assist with suppression activity in the event of a fire.

The harvesting activity itself results in forest fuels being disturbed as a result of the extraction tracks used by machines to extract logs to roadside. This results in fuels being broken up and reduces the likelihood of continuous forest fuels.

- (4) This part of the question should be directed to the Minister for Environment, who has responsibility for this matter.