

MOWEN FOREST

**127. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the minister representing the Minister for Forestry:**

- (1) Did the minister refuse to meet with representatives of the Margaret River group, Save Mowen Forest, which was offering \$90 000 to protect Mowen Forest from logging?
- (2) Was the minister advised that in a meeting with her chief of staff, a local expert provided a comprehensive analysis of the Forest Products Commission as a loss-making and unsustainable enterprise based on the FPC's own annual reports?
- (3) Can the minister confirm that production of quality sawlogs has massively declined, native forestry operates at a cash loss and the state has had to provide FPC with more than \$100 million in working capital?
- (4) What evidence is there to support the chief of staff's reported assertion that the native forestry industry provides 5 500 jobs in the south west when locals have calculated that no more than 352, at most, are employed?

**Hon KEN BASTON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. I reply on behalf of the Minister for Forestry.

- (1) A meeting was arranged with the chief of staff.
- (2) The minister was advised of the representative's view.
- (3) The forestry industry varies from year to year. It is an important part of the south west economy and the government remains committed to this industry.
- (4) The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences "Australia's State of the Forests Report 2013" lists direct employment in forestry in Western Australia as 5 580 employees.