

FOREST PRODUCTS COMMISSION — SAWLOGS

1285. Hon LOUISE KINGSTON to the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to the native forestry ban and the impact it will have on Western Australian communities, and to the government's plan to increase reliance on softwood timber plantations, which have a rotation of 25 to 30 years.

- (1) With a decrease in the supply of sawlogs as a result of the closure of the native forestry industry, how does the government expect to meet demand with softwood sawlogs while waiting 25 or more years for the first rotation of new plantations to mature?
- (2) Has the government conducted an economic impact assessment of the impact that a lack of sawlog supplies will have?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) If so, will the minister table the report?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(4) The premise of the question is incorrect. Softwood timber and hardwood timber are used for different purposes. The Cook Labor government is acting and investing in the future of the state's softwood estate to ensure that the construction and housing industry in WA will have the resource that it will require into the future, through its \$350 million softwood investment program. This investment is being made following years of inaction under the previous Liberal–National government.