

NATIVE FOREST — ECOLOGICAL THINNING

55. Hon LOUISE KINGSTON to the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to the concerns raised with my office that the Forest Products Commission is currently paying contractors whose purpose is to conduct ecological thinning.

- (1) Why did the FPC commence engagement of the contractors if the government does not currently have a plan for ecological thinning?
- (2) What is the value of the contracts?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

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

- (1)–(2) The Cook government has now ended commercial logging of WA’s iconic and unique jarrah and karri forests—a policy the opposition wishes to reverse. A new forest management plan commenced on 1 January 2024. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions has identified suitable areas that meet the criteria for ecological thinning and is in the process of planning and approvals for these areas. Ecological thinning for forest health is not the same as commercial logging. It is important that small business operators and their staff transitioning from commercial logging to ecological thinning activities are supported to undertake training and ensure their equipment is configured for ecological thinning activities.