

25th October 2021

Senior Council Officer
Parliament of New South Wales
BY EMAIL

**Enabling
Sustainability**

Dear

RE: RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO.4

Thank-you for passing on the questions from Portfolio Committee No. 4. It is my pleasure to provide the following answers.

Q1. Has Responsible Wood or PEFC reviewed the Forestry Corporation's PEFC certification in the light of the 2019/20 fires?

Firstly, Responsible Wood is a Standards Development Organisation (SDO). Our purpose is to write and maintain the Australian/New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management.

We do not provide auditing or conformity assessment services to the Australian forest products sector. We do maintain the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme. This scheme is administered on our behalf by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ). JAS-ANZ has the role of accrediting independent certification bodies to provide conformity assessment against the Australian Standards which underpin the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme.

- AS 4708:2013–Sustainable Forest Management
- AS 4707:2014-Chain of Custody for Forest and Tree-Based Products

Under the structure of the scheme, Responsible Wood does not approve or accredit any forest related business, as this responsibility sits with accredited certification bodies. However, I can confirm that all participants in the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme are externally audited on a yearly basis by the accredited certification body.

So, in response to question one, yes the certification of Forest Corporation has been reviewed following the 2019/20 fires.

The certification body for Forest Corporation, BSI has confirmed that audits were performed on Forest Corporation operations in:

- June 2020
- August 2020 (Special Audit)
- May 2021
- October 2021

The audits included a review of Forest Corporation's activities in response to the 2019/20 fires and included the following performance requirements:

- A review of sustainable yield and the impacts on sustainable wood supply.
- Fire risks and controls.
- Matters relating to fire safety.
- Fire recovery planning.
- Harvesting impacts post fire.

Of note, the review of sustainable yields and the impact of wood supply as required by Australian Standard AS 4708 has been made publicly available on the following link.

<https://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/sustainability/timber-volumes-and-modelling>

Q2. What action, if any, has Responsible Wood or PEFC taken to consider the impact of the 2019/2020 fire and what that might mean for the certification process for logging operations in NSW or other affected jurisdictions?

At the time of the 2019/20 fires, the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management AS 4708 was in the early stages of a review process. Learnings from the 2019/20 fires were incorporated into the soon to be published Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4708:2021 Sustainable Forest Management.

Reviewed performance requirements included:

- Stricter and more transparent requirements to protect environmental values in post fire salvage operations.
- Clearer requirements to consider the impact on fire and post disaster activities on the sustainable yield.
- Requirements to implement and control processes to minimize adverse impacts for harvesting operations have been extended to include special considerations for salvage harvesting.

Q3. Does Responsible Wood receive any money from the NSW Government or Forestry Corporation?

Responsible Wood does receive money from Forestry Corporation through membership and notification fees.

Responsible Wood is a not-for-profit membership-based organisation. Membership is open to all interested parties in the following categories.

- a. Forest Grower Members, being persons who are substantively engaged in the primary production of Forest Products.
- b. Primary Processors Members, being persons who are substantively engaged in the primary processing of forest primary produce.
- c. Supply Chain Members, being persons who are substantively engaged in the secondary processing of forest primary product or in any subsequent part of the supply chain of wood and paper products.
- d. Employee Representative Organisation Members, being persons who are an employee representative organisation representing the interest of workers in the forestry and forest products industry; and
- e. Community, Social and Environment Members, being persons who are representing the interests of the community at large with respect to forestry and the forest products industry.

Forestry Corporation is member of Responsible Wood in the Forest Grower category.

In addition, Forestry Corporation contributes a notification fee for participation in the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme.

Q4. If yes, how much does it receive and what is the payment for?

- Membership Fee- Large Category \$7,562
- Notification Fee (very large category)-\$12,749

In the 2020/21 financial year, the audited account of Responsible Wood showed an income from all sources of \$1,162,961. The contribution from Forest Corporation in the 2020/21 FY was approximately **1.75%** of total income.

I hope you find the answers to your questions satisfactory.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Dorries
Chief Executive Officer