



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2020-2021
Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 4 - Industry

**DEPUTY PREMIER, REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES, INDUSTRY AND
TRADE**

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DEPUTY PREMIER, REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES, INDUSTRY AND TRADE

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Wollombi — Future of Coal Statement

1. Why has Wollombi been included in the NSW Future of Coal Statement as one of 13 potential areas for coal exploration?
 - a) Were the Wollombi community meaningfully consulted before being included as an area for coal exploration?
 - b) Was the impact of coal exploration from mining activities on the existing tourism businesses considered before Wollombi was included as an area for coal exploration?
 - c) Was the impact on the health of the Wollombi community and the surrounding environment considered before being included as an area for coal exploration?

ANSWER:

1a to 1c. The NSW Government has held a coal exploration licence over the Wollombi area (AUTH263) since the 1980s to enable assessment of the area for potential release for coal exploration. The area is prospective for both thermal and metallurgical coal. No decision has been taken yet to release the area for coal exploration or mining or to start the assessment process under the Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum Exploration (Strategic Release Framework).

Cessnock Council is provided with an annual notice from the Department outlining details of the Crown-held exploration licence over the Wollombi area.

Zombie PELs

2. How have licensees been allowed to retain the PELs in the NSW north-west contrary to the government's "use it or lose it" policy?

ANSWER:

2. Assessment of the 13 renewal applications was paused until the outcome of the Narrabri Gas project was known. Following the Independent Planning Commission's (IPC) determination to

approve the Narrabri Gas Project, the Department of Regional NSW has recommended the assessment of these applications. Until determinations on the renewals are made, the licences remain active and exploration can continue, subject to environmental approvals.

3. Is the NSW Government negotiating with Santos about which of these zombie PELs it wants to retain?

ANSWER:

3. The Department of Regional NSW is in regular contact with Santos.

4. Does the NSW Government have wider plans for coal seam gas in the state's north-west?

ANSWER:

4. Under the Strategic Opportunities for Gas in Regional NSW statement, released in November 2020, the NSW Government is developing a gas strategy which will be released mid 2021.

Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)
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Bushfire Industry Recovery Package (Sector Development Grants)

5. A number of timber industry businesses have received funding through the Bushfire Industry Recovery Package (Sector Development Grants) – how many jobs will these support?

ANSWER:

5. Sixteen timber industry businesses funded under the Bushfire Industry Recovery Package (Sector Development Grants) are projected to support the retention and creation of over 1,700 jobs.

6. Are there requirements in the funding agreements for the maintenance of current levels of employment or employment growth for organisations who received a grant?
 - a) If so, what are the requirements?
 - b) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

6a to 6b. All funding agreements require successful applicants to report how many jobs will be created or retained for each project.

Forestry Corporation

7. The shareholders of Forestry Corporation have agreed to redirect the \$22.6M unspent from the 2018 equity injection for the purchase of land to replanting. Have there been any discussions about replacement funds for land purchases to grow the estate being allocated in the future?

ANSWER:

7. No.

8. Does Forestry Corporation enter into long-term land leasing in order to conduct forestry plantation operations? If so, how many hectares are currently under lease and what is the length of these leases? If not, why not?

ANSWER:

8. Forestry Corporation has a range of joint venture and annuity arrangements to grow plantations on private land or access timber products from private land where a forest management service is provided.

Hardwood Forests Division has agreements of varying types totalling 1958 hectares. Softwood Plantations Division has agreements of varying types totalling 2439 hectares.

The duration of agreements is generally one rotation.

9. When is a permanent appointment expected to be made to the vacant CEO's position?

ANSWER:

9. Forestry Corporation's Board is currently going through a recruitment process to appoint a CEO.

10. In the Forestry Corporation 2020-21 Statement of Corporate Intent it is noted that a "funding plan is being prepared in conjunction with Treasury and the Department of Regional NSW to

address the deficit position” – has this been completed and if so, what is in the funding plan? If not, why not and when will the funding plan be completed?

ANSWER:

10. The funding plan to address the impact of the 2019/20 bushfires on state-owned infrastructure and replanting of state-owned pine plantations is ongoing. .
11. The Statement of Corporate Intent mentions work to “map a path to recovery” for hardwood supplies and communities – has this work been completed? What was found? When will the “path to recovery” be released?

ANSWER:

11. Forestry Corporation’s Annual Report states, “Work will continue into FY21 to map a path to recovery for both the forests and the industries and communities relying on them. Key initiatives are detailed in the fire recovery strategy, published in the Statement of Corporate Intent.
12. Is the replanting of the forestry plantations on track to be completed in seven years? What risks are there to the completion of the replanting in this timeframe?

ANSWER:

12. Yes. Operational risks are no different to any other plantation program.
13. Timber revenue is expected to decrease by 25 per cent – what impact will this have on the organisation? Will it result in job losses? If so, how many?

ANSWER:

13. Forestry Corporation is still managing significant salvage, infrastructure repair and replanting programs and working with customers to manage future timber supply impacts. This remains the priority as we seek to maximise job opportunities across the sector.
14. Approximately 5 per cent of revenue comes from “other income” – what items are included in this?

ANSWER:

14. Other income is detailed in Note 6 in Forestry Corporation's Financial Statements.

15. Does Forestry Corporation have plans to grow other sources of income? If so, how and what is the growth target?

ANSWER:

15. The income source derived from State forests is diversified and opportunities around income avenues are considered during the strategic planning and budgeting processes.

16. Has Forestry Corporation applied for a dividend exemption for the current financial year? Was the application successful?

ANSWER:

16. No.

17. Given the reduction in available timber supply, by how much is contract haulage and harvest expenses expected to fall? What impact will this have on contractor numbers?

ANSWER:

17. Medium-term log supply is projected to decrease by around 25 per cent and harvest and haul expenses and contractor numbers will be impacted. However, replanting will increase by approximately 80 per cent, helping to offset this impact.

18. How many organisations have received transport subsidies? What is the total amount of transport subsidies paid since January 2020?

ANSWER:

18. Eighteen organisations have received transport subsidies for burnt timber under the Bushfire Industry Recovery Package (Stream 1 - Supply Chain Grants). Total amount paid since January 2020 is \$3,670,296, jointly funded by the NSW and Federal Governments.

Resources for Regions

19. How many jobs will be created through projects funded under Round 7 of the Resources for Regions program?

ANSWER:

19. Job creation figures will be measured as part of the Resources for Regions Round Seven evaluation.

20. Were Councils required to submit information to the Department for its consideration prior to projects being selected for funding? If so, how many projects were rejected as not being eligible or appropriate to be funded through the program?

ANSWER:

20. Yes. In Round Seven, only two projects were deemed ineligible for funding.

21. Can you provide a full list of the 84 projects funded under Round 7 of the Resources for Regions program and the funding allocated to each project?

ANSWER:

21. All successful projects and funding amounts are published on the NSW Government website.

22. Will there be any changes to the process for selecting projects or allocating funds in Round 8?

ANSWER:

22. Guidelines for Round Eight have not been finalised.

23. When will applications open for Round 8 of the Resources for Regions program and when will they close?

ANSWER:

23. Round Eight dates have not been finalised.

24. When will each of the eligible Councils be notified of the amount that their Council will receive for Round 8?

a) If it is indicated that they already know, what is the allocation by LGA?

ANSWER:

24 and 24a. The details for Round Eight have not been finalised.

25. Can the Department provide the mining employment location quotient for each eligible local government area for Round 7 and Round 8?

ANSWER:

25. Employment location quotients are drawn from publicly available data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

26. Are there any implications for the Resources for Regions program following the Government's decision to redirect royalties from non-renewable resources into the New Generations Fund?

ANSWER:

26. No.

NSW Minerals Strategy

27. Under the NSW Minerals Strategy, the Government committed to increasing the proportion of greenfield exploration relative to brownfield exploration done in NSW by 10 per cent on 2018 levels by 2025 – is the Government on track to meet this target?

a) How much has the proportion increased above 2018 levels?

ANSWER:

27 and 27a. Despite the impact of COVID-19 on the exploration sector, NSW remains on track to meet the target. The number of applications for new mineral tenements received in the 2020 calendar year was more than 230 per cent higher than in 2018.

28. Has NSW achieved a score of 95 in the Fraser Institute Annual Survey of Mining Companies?

a) If not, what score did it last achieve?

b) Will it achieve a score of 95 by 2025?

c) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

28 and 28a-c. In the NSW Minerals Strategy, the NSW Government set a target to achieve a score of 95 per cent for "the quality of our geological database not being a deterrent to future

investment" over the five years to 2025. NSW achieved a rating of 97 per cent for this category in the 2020 Fraser Institute Annual Survey of Mining Companies.

29. When will the NSW Minerals Strategy be reviewed?

ANSWER:

29. The NSW Government remains committed to the goals set out in the Minerals Strategy and is currently considering whether to update it.

30. Have all of the actions in the NSW Minerals Strategy that were due to be completed by the end of 2020 been completed?

- a) If not, which ones have not been and what was the reason for the delay?
- b) Please provide details of how each action has been implemented.

ANSWER:

30. All but one of the actions due to be completed in 2020 have been completed.

a) The outstanding action relates to streamlining invoicing processes. This has been delayed due to changes to financial systems arising from machinery of government changes.

b) 1.1 This action is not yet due.

1.2 Complete and available online.

1.3 This action is not yet due.

1.4 Complete and available online.

1.5 Complete and available online.

2.1 Phase 2 of the rollout of Titles Management System (TMS) is complete and work is ongoing to provide enhanced functionality.

2.2 Performance against delivery standards has improved significantly since the Strategy was launched.

2.3 Complete as part of TMS.

2.4 See response to (a).

3.1 Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG) continues to promote investment in a number of ways including through online platforms and key events.

3.2 The third round was launched, with a record number of applications.

3.3 Complete and available online.

3.4 MEG has explored a range of options. Focus is currently on the potential for the Parkes Special Activation Precinct.

- 4.1 Review has been completed.
- 4.2 Review has been completed.
- 4.3 A pilot program has been developed with industry input.
- 4.4 The minimum standards have been published and are in effect.
- 5.1 The website was reviewed, with out of date and superseded material removed or replaced.
- 5.2 MEG has regular communication with the Association of Mining and Energy Related Councils (AMERC).
- 5.3 The Quarterly Performance Report is published online.
- 6.1-6.3 A new section tab has been established on the MEG website to support diversity in mining and mining careers.
- 6.4 GSNSW has an ongoing outreach program, though events were paused due to COVID-19.

31. Has the NSW Minerals Strategy been evaluated to determine whether the actions implemented have been effective?

a) If not, why not and when will an evaluation take place?

ANSWER:

31 and 31a. The Minerals Strategy is an ongoing commitment to grow the minerals industry, with continued effort applied to promote investment into the industry in NSW. The significant growth in mineral exploration in NSW since 2018 would indicate the overall success of the strategy.

32. What has been the feedback provided by stakeholders on the actions contained in the strategy and its implementation?

ANSWER:

32. Feedback has been positive.

33. What was the total cost of developing and publishing the strategy?

ANSWER:

33. The principal cost in developing the Strategy was staff time, which was absorbed as part of the normal business of Mining, Exploration and Geoscience division and other agencies.

34. Will the strategy be updated and if so when?

a) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

34 and 34a. Refer to answer to Question 29.

Blue Ridge Hardwoods

35. Which NSW agency is coordinating implementation of the support program for redundant workers at Blue Ridge Hardwoods?

ANSWER:

35. Department of Regional NSW

36. How many employees at Blue Ridge Hardwoods have accessed the special government payment as at 26 February 2021?

ANSWER:

36. Fifty-one.

37. The program guidelines stated: “Full time workers will be eligible to receive \$150,000. Part-time workers will receive support on a pro rata basis.”- how many workers have been paid the full payment?

a) How many workers were paid the pro rata payment?

b) What was the average pro rate payment?

ANSWER:

37. Fifty-one.

37a and b. 0

38. Was this paid as taxable income i.e. a redundancy “top up” and not in lieu of redundancy, or any other benefits, which would have been payable by the employer?

ANSWER:

38. The Department of Regional NSW has put affected workers in touch with independent financial advisors. Any taxation implications are a matter for those individuals. The support provided did not replace the legal obligations of the employer to pay any entitlements owing.

39. Did workers receive all of the statutory employment entitlements upon redundancy?

- a) If not, why not?
- b) Which statutory entitlements were not paid?

ANSWER:

39a and b. This is a matter for the employer as the Department of Regional NSW does not hold this information.

40. How many employees at Blue Ridge Hardwoods have found other employment?

ANSWER:

40. The Department of Regional NSW does not hold this information.

41. Is the NSW agency administering payments to workers aware of how much of each full payment or pro rata payment was spent on training and professional financial advice?

ANSWER:

41. No.

42. What is the total cost of the program?

ANSWER:

42. The total cost of the program was revealed in a media release from the member for Bega in February 2019.

43. What percentage of this cost was directly paid to workers?

ANSWER:

43. To date, 99.6 per cent of the total program funding has been directly paid to workers. The remainder has been spent on the provision of independent financial advice to the workers.

NSW Strategic Statement on Coal

44. Since the release of the Strategic Statement on Coal a number of nations to which NSW coal is exported to have announced their intention to achieve targets of net-zero emissions by either 2050 or 2060 – have forecasts of coal demand contained in the statement been adjusted to reflect this change in demand? What impact on forecast total demand for thermal coal will this have?

ANSWER:

44. The Strategic Statement on Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW was informed by a number of models and studies. The NSW Government is continuing to monitor and consider new information as it becomes available.

Thermal coal currently remains a critical energy source globally, supplying over a third of all electricity, as outlined in the Strategic Statement. The demand for NSW metallurgical (coking) coal remains strong as there are currently limited practical substitutes available for its use in steel manufacturing.

45. How frequently will review the areas in which coal mining can occur in NSW be reviewed?

ANSWER:

45. The potential areas are subject to ongoing consideration and assessment by the Advisory Body on Strategic Release and the NSW Government.

46. In relation to part 3 of the Plan of Action (Reducing the impact of coal mining) what steps have been taken to:

- a) Strengthen regulatory requirements around mine rehabilitation and closure planning
- b) Improved management of air and water impacts from coal mining?
- c) Reduce fugitive emissions?
- d) Security of supply for domestic coal users?

ANSWER:

46 (a) Regional NSW is progressing a series of operational reforms to improve mine rehabilitation obligations and oversight. These reforms were subject to public consultation

during October and November 2020 and are expected to be implemented through amendments to the Mining Regulation 2016 in the coming months.

In addition, a cross-agency Mine Rehabilitation Steering Committee has been established to progress other key reforms with an initial focus on post mine closure land use, final voids, residual risk and mines in care and maintenance.

(b) Work to ensure appropriate management of these impacts through government strategies and requirements relating to water and air is ongoing.

(c) The Coal Innovation NSW Fund is supporting the development and deployment of safe, cost effective technologies for abating ventilation air methane (VAM) emissions from underground coal mines. This includes funding research and demonstration of advanced types of reactors for destructing VAM, and through collaborating with the Commonwealth Government (under the Energy and Emissions Memorandum of Understanding) and industry to enable commercial deployment within Australia.

The CINSW team and Ministerial Advisory Council are working with DPIE's Energy, Environment and Sustainability group to ensure government programs supporting the coal mining, cement and steel manufacture industries to reduce their emissions are integrated, effectively targeted and deliver value for money. This includes for the recently announced \$750m Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program 2021, the guidelines for which are currently being developed.

(d) The NSW Government monitors security of domestic coal supply for domestic power stations and other consumers.

47. Part 3 of the Plan of Action notes that it will “continue to ensure mining-affected communities receive an appropriate share of the benefits of mining” – what, in addition to the Resources for Regions program, is being done to provide an appropriate share?

a) Is the amount allocated through Resources for Regions considered an “appropriate share” for mining-affected communities?

ANSWER:

47 and 47a. The Government is committed to ensuring mining-affected communities receive an appropriate share of the benefits of mining. Alongside the benefits already delivered by the industry directly to their local communities (including jobs and economic development), the NSW Government's Resources for Regions program is specifically designed to support communities in key areas of NSW that are mining-affected. Following a review, the Resources for Regions program

was refreshed in 2020, with key changes such as prescribed allocations of funding guaranteed for eligible councils to ensure funding will flow where it is needed most. Community programs are now eligible in addition to infrastructure projects. This ensures that even more support is provided to the right areas and long term and lasting benefits are delivered for these important communities.

48. What support is the NSW Government providing in “supporting diversification of coal-reliant regional economies to assist with the phase-out of thermal coal mining” (Action Plan Item 4)?

a) What is the total value of the support delivered to each mining-affected local government area?

ANSWER:

48 and 48a. The Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) appointed Deloitte in June 2020 to undertake the Upper Hunter Futures Project to evaluate the economic, planning and social landscape of the Upper Hunter, to provide a robust analysis of plausible scenarios and guide future action, particularly in light of the global transition to lower carbon forms of energy.

The Deloitte work, completed in December 2020, builds on the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Action Plan endorsed by the Deputy Premier in July 2018. DRNSW established and chairs the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Working Group (which includes State agencies, the Commonwealth, local government and the University of Newcastle) to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan.

A similar process is being progressed for Lithgow LGA in 2021.

The following outlines the total value of support by LGA:

1. Upper Hunter-wide support - \$299,115
 - a) LGA specific:
 - i. Upper Hunter Shire - \$12,760,904
 - ii. Muswellbrook Shire - \$24,952,825
 - iii. Dungog Shire - \$1,332,000
2. Lithgow - \$8,558,735

49. Can the Government detail the actions that it will take in its “...flexible, adaptive approach to respond to global economic change...” noted on page 10 of the Strategic Statement on Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW?

ANSWER:

49. Refer to the answer to Question 44.

50. What was the total cost to produce and publish the Strategic Statement on Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW?

ANSWER:

50. Refer to the answer to Question 33.

51. How frequently will the Strategic Statement be updated?

ANSWER:

51. The Strategic Statement does not have an update scheduled.

52. What steps is the Government taking to support mining companies reduce the emissions associated with their operations?

ANSWER:

52. The Coal Innovation NSW Fund is supporting the development and deployment of safe, cost effective technologies for abating ventilation air methane (VAM) emissions from underground coal mines. This includes funding research and demonstration of advanced types of reactors for destructing VAM, and through collaborating with the Commonwealth Government (under the Energy and Emissions Memorandum of Understanding) and industry to enable commercial deployment within Australia.

Timber harvesting and bushfire

53. The SMH reported on 12 February 2021 that a study conducted by Griffith University and the Australian National University reported that it was “up to seven times more likely that the canopy of a logged forest will burn compared with an unlogged forest” – at the time the article was written there was no comment from either the Deputy Premier or Forestry Corporation – has any assessment of this research been undertaken?

a) If so, is it an accurate assessment of the impact of timber harvesting?

ANSWER:

53 and 53a. In May 2020 the Department of Regional NSW (DPI Forest Science) conducted an empirical analysis of the area of forest burnt in NSW in the 2019-2020 fires in each of four severity classes: low, medium, high and extreme, across the three main tenures burnt: national parks, State forests and private forests. Fire severity within harvested areas in State forests was also investigated to determine whether harvested areas influenced fire severity at the landscape scale. Fire severity was found to be much the same regardless of tenure. If anything, it was slightly higher in national parks. The Final Report of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry notes: "there was no clear influence from inferred different management practices (for example, logging in State forests or grazing on private land) on the fuel properties of the forests on different land tenures." The report is available at https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/1222391/fire-severity-in-harvested-areas.pdf.

Great Koala National Park

54. Has Forestry Corporation undertaken an analysis on the proposal to establish a Great Koala National Park in NSW?
- a) If so, what did the analysis conclude?

ANSWER:

54 and 54a. Forestry Corporation has not been asked to undertake any analysis of this proposal.

55. What would be the impact of the creation of a Great Koala National Park on Wood Supply Agreements on the North Coast of NSW?

ANSWER:

55. See answer to Question 54.

56. Was Forestry Corporation asked to provide input into the report commissioned by Coffs Harbour and Bellingen councils, along with Destination North Coast, and the University of Newcastle, to undertake an economic and environmental analysis of the proposed Great Koala National Park?

ANSWER:

56. No.

57. Does Forestry Corporation agree with the assumptions in the report, and its findings on the value of the industry, the cost of cancelling Wood Supply Agreements, and the ability of industry to continue without Wood Supply Agreements?

ANSWER:

57. No, and the report did not incorporate information provided about the current high level of visitation to the multi tourism award winning State Forests within the proposed area, nor does it note that all proposed tourism ventures and opportunities are already offered within north coast State forests including the proposed mountain bike, 4WD and horse riding tracks. The report also does not consider that the NSW Government has already supported the development of a Wild Koala Breeding Centre in Cowarra State Forest near Port Macquarie, which is planned to become an iconic tourism destination.

Critical Minerals Work Plan

58. What is the purpose of the Commonwealth's Critical Minerals Work Plan?

ANSWER:

58. This question is better directed to the Commonwealth Government.

59. What are the key milestones and dates for achieving those milestones under the Commonwealth's Critical Minerals Work Plan?

ANSWER:

59. Refer to answer to Question 58.

60. What role and/or responsibilities does the NSW Government have in the Commonwealth's Critical Minerals Work Plan?

ANSWER:

60. The NSW government continues to work with the Commonwealth Government's Critical Minerals Facilitation Office (CMFO). The current focus is investigating how to facilitate new

investment into critical minerals exploration, mining and downstream supply chain opportunities in NSW.

61. Is the Critical Minerals Work Plan considering the national security implications of certainty in the supply of critical minerals into the future?

ANSWER:

61. This question is better directed to the Commonwealth government.

62. What steps is the NSW Government taking to support the development of, and investment in, minerals refining and processing, particularly in relation to rare earths, in NSW?

ANSWER:

62. Key actions taken in recent years include the provision of geological data to highlight opportunities, raising the profile of investment-ready projects with international partners, establishing an investor query response service, establishment of an online minerals prospectus and publication of the Future of Minerals report.

Coal Mine Extensions

63. For each the coal mine extension application determinations considered and approved by the IPC since the Commission's establishment to what date has each NSW coal mine operation extended until following the IPC's approval? Please provide a list of the coal mine operation and its location.

ANSWER:

63. Please refer this question to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

Mine Rehabilitation

64. In response to a Question on Notice in June 2020 the Government indicated that its response to the Mine Rehabilitation Discussion Paper remained underway – has the review and response been completed?

a) If not, why not?

- b) If yes, what are the changes to rehabilitation requirements? Has the Government agreed to implement them? From when will they take effect?

ANSWER:

64a-b. Regional NSW is progressing a series of operational reforms to improve mine rehabilitation obligations and oversight. These reforms were subject to public consultation during October and November 2020 and are expected to be implemented through amendments to the Mining Regulation 2016 in the coming months.

65. What is the total value of mine rehabilitation security deposits held by the Government?

- a) Is this considered a sufficient amount to cover the “full cost” of all mine rehabilitation in NSW?

ANSWER:

65. Updated information can be found at

<https://www.resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au/environment/rehabilitation>

65a. Yes, all current titleholders must lodge a rehabilitation security deposit that covers the government's full costs in undertaking rehabilitation in the event of default. Note however this framework does not apply to legacy and historical mine sites.

66. How much interest is earned annually on security deposits?

- a) What happens to the interest earned?

ANSWER:

66 and 66a. Interest is only earned on security deposits held in cash. The majority of the mining rehabilitation security deposits are provided in the form of a bank guarantee, which does not accrue interest. In the 2019-20 financial year \$385,807 was earned in interest. This interest was deposited into the Derelict Mine Sites Fund for the rehabilitation of derelict mine sites.

Port Kembla Community Investment Fund

67. How many applications were received under Round 4 of the Port Kembla Community Investment Fund?

ANSWER:

67. Thirty-two.

68. What was the total value of funds sought in Round 4?

ANSWER:

68. \$6.2 million

69. How many applications were received for suburbs adjacent to the 2502 postcode?

a) What was the total amount of funds sought through these applications?

ANSWER:

69 and 69a. Five applications received requesting \$659,302 in funding.

70. How was the demonstration of clear and significant benefits to the Port Kembla community of applications from suburbs surrounding Port Kembla assessed?

ANSWER:

70. Assessment were undertaken by the Department and an Evaluation Panel.

71. How many people completed the community consultation survey?

ANSWER:

71. One hundred.

72. What was the total cost of community consultation on Round 4?

ANSWER:

72. \$30,562 (GST exclusive).

73. Why was only one location selected for people to receive a gift voucher upon completion of the community survey?

ANSWER:

73. This is standard procedure by the contractor.

74. How was the location in (69) selected?

ANSWER:

74. Suburbs directly adjacent to Port Kembla 2505 were considered.

75. How many vouchers were provided to people completing the survey at the location in (69)?

ANSWER:

75. One hundred.

76. What was the total value of the vouchers provided to people for completing the community survey at the location in (69)?

ANSWER:

76. \$2,000.

77. Will the organisation who designed and implemented this approach to community consultation be used again?

ANSWER:

77. Yes and the process will be tailored as required.

78. Have all projects from Rounds 1, 2 and 3 been completed?

a) If not, which projects are yet to be completed and why?

ANSWER:

78 and 78a. Rounds 1 and 2 are now complete. Round 3 projects have until 30 June 2021 to be completed.

79. Where was the steel used to build the viewing platform at Port Kembla sourced from?

ANSWER:

79. This is a matter for the proponent.

80. According to the Guidelines for Round 4 indicated that the successful projects would be announced in December 2020 – why has the announcement of successful projects been delayed?

ANSWER:

80. This date was a guide only.

81. Have the successful projects in Round 1, Round 2, Round 3 of the Port Kembla Community Investment Fund been announced in keeping with the key dates set out when applications were sought?

a) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

81 and 81a. These dates are a guide only.

82. On what date was the pk2505.com.au website last updated?

ANSWER:

82. This is a Wollongong City Council website.

83. Which department, agency or organisation is responsible for updating the pk250.com.au website?

ANSWER:

83. Please see answer to question 82.

84. What is the annual cost of registering, updating and administering the pk2505.com.au website?

ANSWER:

84. Please see answer to question 82.

85. How many Port Kembla residents and organisations receive email updates following their registration on the pk2505.com.au website?

ANSWER:

85. Please see answer to question 82.

86. On what date will applications for Round 5 of the Port Kembla Community Investment Fund open?

ANSWER:

86. Details for Round 5 have not been finalised.

Review of Mining Legislation

87. Have consultations commenced with stakeholders over the review of mining legislation?

- a) If not, what are the reasons for the delay?
- b) If so:
 - i. When did the consultations take place?
 - ii. Which stakeholders have been consulted?

ANSWER:

87a and b. The Department of Regional NSW has conducted early informal consultations with industry representative groups, including the NSW Minerals Council and the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC), in relation to potential measures that could reduce red tape.

88. Will the review be publicly released?

- a) If so, when will it be released?
- b) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

88a and b. The Department of Regional NSW is currently developing proposals and will consult on potential legislative changes this year.

89. Precisely what measures will be introduced following the review of mining legislation?

ANSWER:

89. The Department of Regional NSW is currently developing proposals.

Subsidence Advisory NSW

90. One of the reasons why the Government amended the Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 1961 was based on the claim that the claim experience for property owners needed to improve – given recent criticisms of the compensation system, are the changes are working?

(a) How did the assessment arrive at this conclusion?

ANSWER:

90 and 90a. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation

91. What is the average days processing time for a property owners claim by Subsidence Advisory NSW?

a) Has this timeframe reduced following the introduction of the changes to the Act? If so, by how much?

b) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

91a and b. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation.

92. What is the take up rate by property owners of the free pre-mine assessments?

a) Is this considered a good rate?

b) Why don't property owners take up this option?

ANSWER:

92a and b. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation.

93. How many subsidence claims were: (a) received, (b) processed and (c) completed during:

- a) 2018
- b) 2019
- c) 2020

ANSWER:

93a-c. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation.

94. How many claims have had review requests during (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020?
- a) On average how many days does it take to complete a review?
 - b) What proportion of the original decisions were changed or overturned after they were reviewed?

ANSWER:

94 a and b. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation

95. How many Case Advisors are employed by Subsidence Advisory NSW?
- a) How many other staff are employed?

ANSWER:

95. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation

96. What is the average cost of employing a Case Advisor?

ANSWER:

96. This is a matter for the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation

Uranium mining

97. In relation to recommendation 6 in the Government's response to the Uranium Mining and Nuclear Facilities (Prohibitions) Repeal Bill 2019, which indicated, "The NSW Government will provide its position on uranium mining in the near future":

- a) What is the NSW Government's position on uranium mining?

- b) When will it formalise its position on uranium mining?
- c) What is the delay in finalising its position on uranium mining?

ANSWER:

97a to c. The NSW Government is continuing to consider its position on uranium mining in NSW.

98. In relation to Recommendation 1, has the Government received any applications for uranium exploration titles?
- a) If so, how many have been received?

ANSWER:

98 and 98a. No

99. In relation to Recommendation 1, is the Government still considering running a formal expression of interest process with respect of uranium exploration titles?
- a) if so, when will this take place?

ANSWER:

99 and 99a. No.

EPA site-specific forestry operating conditions

100. What are the issues with the EPA's site-specific operating conditions and the cause of the dispute with Forestry Corporation?

ANSWER:

100. The case-by-case process to develop site specific operating conditions has not proven to be viable, which is why the NSW Government has engaged the National Resources Commission.

101. Can a list of the locations at which site-specific operating conditions applied be provided, along with the date of the commencement and conclusion of the conditions at each location, the date

of the commencement of any renegotiation of the site-specific operating conditions, the date of the conclusion of the renegotiation and the new expiration date.

ANSWER:

101. All Site Specific Operating Conditions for fire-affected forests are published on the EPA's website.

102. What is the feedback from contractors about the EPA's prescriptions?

ANSWER:

102. That is a question for contractors.

103. Can harvesting occur under these conditions?

a) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

103 and 103a. Forestry Corporation has carried out limited operations under Site Specific Operating Conditions.

104. Do the EPA's site-specific prescriptions give consideration to Forestry Corporation's contractual obligations to mills?

a) If not, why not?

b) If so, how do the EPA site-specific prescriptions enable Forestry Corporation to comply with its contractual obligations to mills?

ANSWER:

104a and b. Questions about whether the EPA considered Forestry Corporation's contractual obligations should be directed to that agency.

105. Have any mills run out of logs as a result of the EPA delays?

a) If so, please list the mills effected, their location and what has the impact been on the operation of those mills?

ANSWER:

105. Forestry Corporation is aware that some customers have reached very low levels of stock following the 2019-20 fires and has worked with industry to maintain some supply of timber from private forestry operations.

105a. Stock levels are the commercial information of mills, which are private companies.

106. What will happen to mills' log supply if harvesting does not resume soon in Eden and the South Coast?

- a) Have any support measures been considered for mills in this region?
- b) If so, what support may be available?

ANSWER:

106. Harvesting is resuming in these areas.

(a) and (b) A range of bushfire recovery support measures have been rolled out to assist the forestry industry, including access to the \$140 million Bushfire Industry Recovery package, comprising Supply Chain Support Grants and Sector Development Grants. Other assistance measures have included:

- Special Disaster Grants of up to \$75,000 to help pay for repair costs.
- Grants of up to \$10,000 for small businesses that have experienced a significant decline in revenue as a result of the NSW 2019-2020 bushfires.
- Special Disaster loans for small businesses and primary producers in bushfire impacted Local Council Areas. This program includes a Bushfire Working Capital Loan of up to \$50,000 and low interest loans of up to \$500,000; and
- Continued access to the Forest Industries Innovation Fund loan scheme.

107. When does Forestry Corporation intend to resume harvesting operations across NSW?

ANSWER:

107. Forestry Corporation has not ceased harvesting operations across all regions of NSW.

108. How many times have Forestry Corporation and the EPA met to discuss or improve site-specific operating conditions?

a) When did the last meeting take place?

ANSWER:

108. Numerous meetings between Forestry Corporation and EPA about site-specific conditions have taken place since December 2019. During November and December 2020, meetings took place on at least a weekly basis. The matter is also discussed at regular senior officers group meetings.

108a. The last senior officers group meeting at which site specific operating conditions were discussed took place in February 2021.

109. How many stop work orders have been received by Forestry Corporation since January 2020?

a) How many have been resolved?

b) How were they resolved?

c) How many remain unresolved?

ANSWER:

109. 2

(a) 2

(b) Neither stop work order was extended by the regulator after their expiry. Forestry Corporation reviewed its procedures in light of the stop work orders.

(c) 0

110. Have any fines, penalties or other actions been taken against Forestry Corporation by the EPA since January 2020?

a) If so, what were they?

b) What was the total value of fines and penalties that have been levied against Forestry Corporation?

ANSWER:

110.

Yes.

(a-b) Regulation of forestry activities is reported by the EPA in its annual NSW Forestry Snapshot

Report. Forestry Corporation reports fines issued by regulators and convictions recorded on an annual basis in its Sustainability Report.

Resilience NSW

111. What role does Resilience NSW play in the cyber security space?

- a) Is Resilience NSW playing a role in managing cyber security for the NSW Government?
- b) Who in Government has ultimate responsibility for cyber security?

ANSWER:

111a and b. The NSW whole-of-Government response to cyber security issues is led by Cyber Security NSW in collaboration with NSW agencies, including Resilience NSW.

112. Are you investigating the latest Accellion data breach?

- a) Has anyone from Resilience NSW met with the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation or the Australian Signals Directorate about any recent data breaches?
- b) Has the Accellion data breach had any safety impacts across NSW hospitals or transport networks?

ANSWER:

112a and b. Please see <https://www.nsw.gov.au/customer-service/news-and-events/news/cyber-security-nsw-monitoring-developments-accellion-fta-data>.

113. How much money is being spent on boosting cyber security in NSW?

- a) Where is that being spent?
- b) How much money has been spent managing the investigation and fallout from recent data breaches?

ANSWER:

113. This is a matter for the Minister for Customer Service.

114. Several of the recent data breaches are related to vulnerabilities with file sharing. Service NSW had their emails breached, and now the Accellion file transfer system was hacked. What is the NSW government's current approach to file sharing?

- a) Are you aware that Service NSW is still sharing documents via email, despite this being the cause of last year's data breach?
- b) What are you doing to fix that vulnerability?

ANSWER:

114. This is a matter for the Minister for Customer Service.

115. Are you aware of the Auditor General's review into Service NSW's data breach, and do you support all of the Auditor General's recommendations?

- a) If not, what is the reason for your opposition to one or more of the Auditor General's recommendations?
- b) Will you be implementing all of the recommendations?

ANSWER:

115. This is a matter for the Minister for Customer Service..

116. Are you aware that up to 30,000 people are still unaware their private information was compromised in the Service NSW breach last year?

- a) At a Federal level, notifying citizens of a data breach is mandatory. Mandatory notification is also recommended by the Information and Privacy Commission of NSW. Do you support the idea of mandatory notification of data breaches at a State level?
- b) If not, what is the reason for your opposition?

ANSWER:

116. This is a matter for the Minister for Customer Service.

Regional Growth Fund - Growing Regional Economies – Thornton Precinct

117. In 2011 the former Liberal Member for Maitland, the Hon Robyn Parker MLC criticised a review by the RTA which found that 1400 homes could be constructed in the area before a new rail bridge at Thornton is needed [eg: complete the duplication of the existing bridge commenced by the former Labor Government]. Ms Parker went on to say: *“Thornton Bridge was needed in 2009, it’s vital infrastructure.”* If the duplication of the bridge was vital infrastructure in 2009 and 2011, why hasn’t the NSW Government built it already, considering ten years have passed since the election?

ANSWER:

117. This is a matter for the Minister for Regional Roads and Transport.

118. People across Maitland suburbs such as Thornton, Largs, Bolwarra, Morpeth and Chisholm are complaining that it takes over 45 minutes just to get through Thornton, a 2 or 3km trip, due to the congestion issues faced at connections with the state roads – New England Highway and Raymond Terrace Road. Why has the NSW Government not granted funding to the Maitland City Council to fix these connections and upgrade the state owned rail bridge?

ANSWER:

118. This is a matter for the Minister for Regional Roads and Transport.

119. There are thousands of commuters in and around the Thornton Industrial Estate trying to get to and from work each day. There are reports of increasing commercial rental vacancies, as businesses are moving out due to the congestion in the area. Why is the NSW Government not supporting the regional growth generated by the Thornton industrial estate through proper infrastructure development funds?

ANSWER:

119. This is a matter for the Minister for Regional Roads and Transport.

120. Thornton North was identified in the NSW Government’s Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006-2031 as a major priority release area for residential development. There was originally a

development cap of 800 lots that could be developed in this region until the duplication of the Thornton Bridge took place. Under your Government, in 2012, your Government removed the cap. Why has your Government failed to duplicate the rail bridge that is so desperately needed in the area to ensure the safety of residents?

ANSWER:

120. This is a matter for the Minister for Regional Roads and Transport.

121. In 2015, when the Member for Maitland asked about the duplication of the Thornton railway bridge, the Government stated that “*the Thornton Bridge duplication strategy released in October 2010 has not changed. Roads and Maritime Services expects the second bridge will only be needed when traffic increases with the residential development at Chisholm.*” Why has your Government not commenced the duplication of the rail bridge?

ANSWER:

121. This is a matter for the Minister for Regional Roads and Transport.

122. In 2017/18, The Maitland City Council applied for \$51.17 million in funding under the NSW Government’s Regional Growth Fund – Growing Regional Economies to undertake five projects within the Thornton Precinct, an established industrial estate and business hub. The project was designed to support connectivity between the New England Highway and Raymond Terrace Road, to current and future employment land and adjacent to residential areas. Maitland City Council has estimated that there are unfunded roadworks required for the Thornton precinct of around \$107 million. In the 2017/18 year (the same year), the stamp duty generated from the 2322 postcode (encompassing Thornton, Chisholm, Thornton North, Beresfield, Woodberry and Tarro) was in excess of \$165 million. Why did the Government not approve a grant of \$51.17 million (that would have been less than dollar for dollar funding) from a region that generated over three times that amount in stamp duty, and is a major connecting industrial and residential area between two state roads?

ANSWER:

122. The project did not meet the Restart NSW fund criteria.

Maitland Resources Jobs to be moved to Dubbo

123. In October 2019, the Deputy Premier the Hon John Barilaro MP stated in Budget Estimates that: “I can categorically say this clearly that the jobs will remain in Maitland. We are not moving the office to any other part of the State. The truth of it is that I would be silly to do so. We know we have some efficiencies across government in relation to the public sector jobs but regional and rural New South Wales is excluded from that—Maitland is regional and rural New South Wales. The answer is: absolutely no—not now, not tomorrow, not while I am Minister.” Why, if you “are not moving the office to any other part of the State” is the Head Office (Mining, Exploration and Geoscience) now located at 47-59 Wingewarra Street Dubbo NSW 2830?

ANSWER:

123. The Head Office for Mining, Exploration and Geoscience is at 516 High Street Maitland.

124. Why is the Head Office is still showing at 516 High Street Maitland NSW 2320 on the Service NSW website: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/nswgovdirectory/mineral-resources>, the NSW Government Mining, Exploration and Geoscience Website: <https://www.resourcesandgeoscience.nsw.gov.au/regulation/about-us/contact-us> and the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue: <https://miningdialogue.com.au/about/contacts> ?

ANSWER:

124. The Head Office for Mining, Exploration and Geoscience is correctly shown as 516 High Street Maitland.

125. These jobs won't be any closer to mines in the Gunnedah Coal fields, so what is the justification for the move?

ANSWER:

125. See answer to Question 124.

126. The main focus of exploration in the Dubbo area is for rare earth resources and metallurgical mining rather than other energy related mining, so what is the justification for moving Mining Energy jobs and the Energy Regulator further away from energy related mines?

ANSWER:

126. The Department of Regional NSW has mining related roles across NSW.

127. Why have you decided to create a Head Office in your Department of Mining, Exploration and Geoscience four hours away from the current location which is closer to two thirds of the mining that happens in NSW?

ANSWER:

127. See answer to Question 124.

128. Why have you not briefed the local Member for Maitland about this policy?

ANSWER:

128. See answer to Question 124.

129. The Secretary of the Department of Regional NSW said in Budget Estimates in February 2021 that there will be “no-one forced to relocate from Maitland out to Dubbo” and “There is no forced pressure to get them out of Maitland”, however the Workforce Regionalisation Policy PEC-002 states that: *Positions must be filled in the four regional centres if they are: newly created ongoing positions for more than 12 months...and able to be performed outside Sydney CBD, Parramatta CBD or Newington...Existing DRNSW Permanent or long-term temporary staff (greater than 12 months tenure) can apply for new permanent positions advertised across the 4 regional hubs. If such a person is clearly the best candidate for the position based on merit they can be appointed to the position and stay in their current location but will be expected to travel regularly to the regional base where their team is located. Where candidates are of equal suitability, preference will go to the candidate who is willing to base themselves at the regional hub.* Won’t this force some Maitland based staff applying for newly created positions to move to one of the regions?

ANSWER:

129. Refer to answer to Question 126.

130. The Workforce Regionalisation Policy PEC-002 also states that “Successful candidates must live within a reasonable distance (rule of thumb is within one hour’s drive) from the location.

Flexible work arrangement cannot be used to allow candidates to live further away.” Isn’t this direction contrary to everything we have learned during COVID-19 about the ability for people to work remotely?

(a) Doesn’t it discriminate against anyone who lives more than one hour’s drive from any of these regional destinations?

ANSWER:

130 and 130a. I am advised the Department wants its staff to be based in regional NSW to be close to the people they serve to ensure their actions, decisions and initiatives make regional NSW an even better place to live, work and play.

Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund

131. Yasmin Catley MP, Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Jobs, and Shadow Minister for Building Reform and Property has made contact on a number of occasions with the Deputy Premier’s office enquiring on the progress of Bahtabah Local Aboriginal Land Council’s application to the Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund, yet has failed to receive a reply. Can you confirm if Bahtabah Local Aboriginal Land Council’s application was successful?

ANSWER:

131. The applicant has been notified.

132. The Government on its own websites boasts the fund has supported 69 projects since its inception, yet only highlights three success stories of the fund. I request you provide a list of these 69 projects?

ANSWER:

132. All successful projects are published on the NSW Government website.

133. Which Minister has final approval over which applicants are successful?

ANSWER:

133. Round 1-4: This is cabinet in confidence. Round 5: Nil. Projects were approved by the two Far West Joint Organisations of Councils.

134. Are applications assessed independent of the Minister responsible? If so detail the process, if not why not?

ANSWER:

134. Yes. Assessment processes are set out in the relevant Program documentation made available to applicants.

Regional NSW

135. On the 3rd of February, John Barilaro announced the NSW Public Sector Regional Workforce principles: Agencies will maintain or grow the size of their workforce in regional NSW, Roles that can be undertaken from anywhere will be advertised as “regional location preferred, Agencies will increase the proportion of regional staff at clerk grade 11/12 (or equivalent) and above compared to lower graded roles by 2023, The public service will protect the number of jobs in vulnerable regional economies (defined in the Local Government Act as localities of fewer than 5,000 residents).

a) In light of the principles above, what is defined as regional NSW?

b) Is Newcastle and Wollongong considered to be part of Sydney metro area?

ANSWER:

135. The definition of ‘Regional NSW’ is available in the *Restart NSW Fund Act 2011*.

136. In the lead up to the election Premier Berejiklian stated “I assure every community in rural and regional NSW that their government jobs are protected”. Considering the Government is now only giving a job protection to localities of fewer than 5,000 residents, has the Government broken its promise?

ANSWER:

136. Under the NSW Public Sector Regional Workforce principles, the number of public servants based in regional NSW will increase.

137. How many LGA’s have less than 5000 residents?

ANSWER:

137. This information is publically available in the ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP).

138. Does the Government commit to not relocating regional jobs from smaller communities to bigger centres (i.e. from Gunnedah to Armidale)?

ANSWER:

138. Under the NSW Public Sector Regional Workforce principles, public service jobs in small regional communities are protected.

139. If a job is relocated from Gunnedah to Armidale, is this a job cut to the Gunnedah community?

ANSWER:

139. This is a hypothetical question. Under the NSW Public Sector Regional Workforce principles, the number of public servants based in regional NSW will increase.

Regional NSW Public Service

140. Why is the Government continuing to cut public sector jobs by implementing a 3% efficiency dividend in the middle of a global pandemic?

ANSWER:

140. This is a matter for the Treasurer.

141. How many jobs will need to be cut across the Department of Regional NSW due to the 3% efficiency dividend contained within the Governments budget?

ANSWER:

141. There will be no job cuts to meet efficiency dividends in the 2020/21 financial year.

142. How many temporary staff are employed within Local Land Services?

ANSWER:

142. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

143. How many permanent staff are employed in Local Land Services?

ANSWER:

143. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

144. How many temporary staff are employed within Department of Primary Industries?

ANSWER:

144. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

145. How many permanent staff are employed in Department of Primary Industries?

ANSWER:

145. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

146. Why doesn't the Government commit to providing permanent jobs to regional workers?

ANSWER:

146. The department provides permanent jobs to regional workers.

147. Can the Government guarantee that no jobs in the regions will be downgraded or reclassified to a lower graded, and lower paid, role?

ANSWER:

147. Role classification and salary points are prescribed through the Crown Employees Award.

148. How does the non-back filling of roles reconcile with the government's commitment to creating jobs?

ANSWER:

148. New roles are created to fulfil the department's needs.

149. How does cutting the wages of public sector workers in the regions support regional economies?

ANSWER:

149. Salaries are prescribed through the Crown Employees Award.

Regional NSW

150. In August 2020, DRNSW announced that they were calling for “volunteers” to relocate from Sydney or Parramatta to one of four Regional Hubs – Queanbeyan, Dubbo, Armidale and Coffs Harbour.

- a) How many public servants have expressed an interest in the relocation?
- b) How many public servants have been relocated?
- c) How many jobs are targeted to be relocated?
- d) What is your plans if you don't reach the target of 400 jobs relocated?
- e) Will staff in regional and remote communities be forced to relocate to these 4 regional hubs if you don't reach this target
- f) Can you confirm that staff will not be paid transferred Employees Compensation Award entitlements?

ANSWER:

150a - f. Relocation of existing Sydney-based staff will be on a voluntary basis and staff who wish to relocate to one of these four locations will be provided with support to do so.

DPI Fisheries

151. Can you confirm how many fisheries technicians' staff have been continuously employed on temporary contracts for periods totalling over 5, years, over 10 years, over 15 years, over 20 years?

ANSWER:

151. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

152. Can you confirm what regional locations that these fisheries technicians are employed in?

ANSWER:

152. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW

153. Does employing these staff temporarily provide the best outcomes for research and regional employment?

ANSWER:

153. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

DPIE Water

154. Can you confirm the creation of the Water Infrastructure Delivery Branch?

ANSWER:

154. This is a matter for the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

155. The development and management of water infrastructure projects are the preview of the State Water corporations. Does this decision indicate that you have lost faith in these SOCs to administer water infrastructure in NSW?

ANSWER:

155. This is a matter for the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

DEPUTY PREMIER

Questions from Mr David Shoebridge MLC

Bushfires

156. When will the current bushfire protections that apply to logging in burned forests be lifted?

ANSWER:

156. The Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval regulates forestry operation in native forests. Where additional Site Specific Operating Conditions have been issued in relation to fire-affected forests, the conditions and their expiry dates are published on the EPA's website. Forestry Corporation plans to implement additional voluntary measures in fire-affected forests during 2021.

157. How much has been paid so far in the battle with the EPA over these protections?

ANSWER:

157. Forestry Corporation worked constructively with the EPA on the development of Site Specific Operating Conditions. There is no specific information on the cost of developing these protections.

158. Why does forestry corporation not accept the position of the environmental regulator about the ongoing need for these protections?

ANSWER:

158. The EPA is the regulator. The policy and legal framework is laid out by the CIFOA. Under that framework, Forestry Corporation is obliged to meet environmental regulations and supply timber in an environmentally sustainable manner. In addition to meeting the rules in the CIFOA, Forestry Corporation is implementing additional environmental safeguards, the substance of which has been drawn from discussions with the environmental regulator to develop Site Specific Operating Conditions to achieve better environmental outcomes.

159. You previously advised that “Forestry Corporation will review its sustainable yield models to take into account the impact of this season’s fires and the outcome of that assessment will inform future planning” - what impact has this assessment had? How many compartments were removed from logging schedules as a result of it?

ANSWER:

159. The review of the long-term sustainable yield models will be released in the near future. The sustainable yield relates to the 100-year supply, not a 12-month operational schedule.

Sustainability report

160. What is behind the significant increase in the amount of rocks/sand/gravel sold from state forests which went from between double and triple previous amounts in 2019/20? (p11)

ANSWER:

160. There has not been an increase in rocks/sand/gravel produced. Unfortunately, an incorrect figure was published in the Sustainability Report in error. The correct figure for rocks/sand/gravel produced in 2019-20 is 67160 tonnes. This has now been corrected.

161. How much did it cost to develop the website interface the report currently is displayed on? What are the licensing costs associated with the site?

ANSWER:

161. The report uses Microsoft Power BI, which is part of the suite of Microsoft Office products Forestry Corporation uses. It is used widely within Forestry Corporation for a range of business reporting purposes.

162. How many forestry corporation employees work on the site?

ANSWER:

162. Data for the Sustainability Report is compiled annually by a range of staff from throughout the organisation. Responsibility for compiling and maintaining the data forms part of the role of 0.6 FTE staff.

163. How many contractors work on the site?

ANSWER:

163. None.

164. How many hits does this report get on average per day?

ANSWER:

164. This information is not recorded.

Jobs

165. How many people employed directly in relation to native forest logging operations (logging or haulage or processing) are forestry corporation employees vs contractors?

ANSWER:

165. Forestry Corporation's staff numbers are reported in its Annual Report. Forestry Corporation does not maintain data on the employee numbers of contracted organisations who perform harvest and haulage operations or other functions. Processing is carried out by customers, which are private businesses and data on the employee numbers of these businesses is not held.

Expanding the plantation estate

166. We understand that all but 1.5 million of the \$24 million allocated for expanding the plantation estate was used instead on replanting efforts - what future plans are there to expand the estate?

ANSWER:

166. Forestry Corporation will continue to look at opportunities to expand the plantation footprint with the right strategic and price fit, but the immediate priority is replanting the fire-affected estate.

167. Regarding the land that was purchased with these funds, what land is this and has this land already been planted?

ANSWER:

167. Forestry Corporation has purchased 633.5 hectares of land in the Tumut and Bathurst Management areas. Forestry Corporation has planted all but 87 hectares, which is scheduled for planting in 2024, after other fire-impacted plantations are re-established.

Pest control

168. How much is currently spent by Forestry Corporation in managing invasive species?

ANSWER:

168. Expenditure on pest and weed management is detailed in Forestry Corporation's Sustainability Report.

169. What is this used for?

ANSWER:

169. A range of strategies are implemented to manage pests and weeds, in line with regional strategic pest animal management plans and Regional Weed Committees. In 2019-20 major pest programs were put in place in conjunction with Local Land Services across State Forests in fire affected areas.

170. What are the target plant and animal species and how much is spent for each?

ANSWER:

170. Target plant and animal species are identified across tenures by regional strategic pest animal management plans and Regional Weed Committees. Forestry Corporation does not record expenditure on pest and weed management by species.

Cumberland State Forest

171. What are current plans for the Cumberland State Forest? Are you aware of the sale of blocks of land adjacent to the forest and do these raise any concerns about risks to the environmental values of the forests?

ANSWER:

171. Cumberland State Forest is managed for conservation and community recreation. The forest is surrounded by houses and private properties, which are periodically sold by their private owners. Forestry Corporation has not identified any environmental impacts on Cumberland State Forest from the sale of land adjacent to the forest.

172. Have you been advised of a proposal for a koala reserve & rehabilitation resource and education facility within the forest?

ANSWER:

172. No.

173. Would you be open to considering such a future for the forest?

ANSWER:

173. Forestry Corporation is unable to comment on a proposal it is not aware of.

Olney State Forest

174. Why has logging been suspended in Olney State Forest compartments 49-52?

ANSWER:

174. It is not unusual for operations to be suspended and crews moved to other jobs depending on other priorities.

175. Under what circumstances would logging resume?

ANSWER:

175. Scheduling of operations takes into account a range of logistical considerations including weather, markets and other operational priorities.

Private Native Forests

176. How many hectares of private native forest are there in NSW?

ANSWER:

176. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

177. How many were impacted by the fires?

ANSWER:

177. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

178. How many hectares that were planned to be harvested in the next 12 months were affected by the fires?

ANSWER:

178. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

179. Are the bushfire impacts to wildlife and habitat on private land being assessed? If not, why not? If yes, how? And how will the assessment of these impacts influence PNF operations?

ANSWER:

179. Yes. Local Land Services continues to work directly with landholders impacted by the fires on a case by case basis to understand the impact of bushfire on their property, and provide advice on how to manage these areas in accordance with the PNF Codes of Practice. The PNF Codes of Practice do not enable salvage harvesting.

The assessment of impacts influencing PNF operations is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

180. Are PNF logging operations currently underway in burnt areas? And in unburnt areas? How many hectares are planned to be harvested in the next 12 months?

ANSWER:

180. This is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW.

Kalang Headwaters

181. Regarding the logging planned for the Kalang Headwaters in 2021/2022 we have been advised that 57% of the 1,800 hectares is high conservation value, and the majority threatened lowland sub-tropical rainforest (693 ha, or 38%), how were these compartments selected?

ANSWER:

181. The areas of public native forest that are set aside for conservation and those that are managed for multiple uses including renewable timber production were identified through the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process, which is managed by the State and Commonwealth Governments and reviewed every five years.

182. Has any calculation been considered by the Department of the tourism and environmental value of these compartments and how this compares to the anticipated yield of any logs retrieved?

ANSWER:

182. All State forests are managed for tourism and environmental value as well as sustainable timber harvesting.

183. What is the cubic metrage of timber expected to be harvested from here?

ANSWER:

183. Timber yield estimates for each compartment are detailed in the publicly available harvest plans.

184. Has this changed since 2017 when 775 hectares in Scotchman and Roses Creek State Forests were identified for logging with an anticipated yield of 4,375 cubic metres?

ANSWER:

184. Refer to answer to Question 183.

185. The mapping of this area shows significant old growth forest and rainforest, will there be exclusions around these to protect them?

ANSWER:

185. The Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval (CIFOA) protects rainforest, old growth and threatened ecological communities as mapped across the landscape. The mapped extent of these forest types is enshrined in the CIFOA and Forestry Corporation protects these areas based on that mapping.

186. Are you aware of the economic feasibility study for the Kalang Headwaters proposal which has identified possible income for the area of over \$400 million from Koala-base recreation?

ANSWER:

186. No.

187. Will you promise the locals that there will be adverse impacts on the proposed reserve from logging, that no threatened or endangered species will be impacted, and no high conservation trees removed?

ANSWER:

187. All native forestry operations are planned to comply with the conditions of the CIFOA.

Biomass and wood

188. Regarding the proposed “Redbank Green Energy Park” in Singleton in the Hunter Valley which will burn 1 million tonnes of native hardwood annually, how much of this will come from public native forests?

ANSWER:

188. Forestry Corporation does not have any contracts to supply Redbank Green Energy Park.

189. What discussions if any have you had with the proponents or other agencies about this proposed plant?

ANSWER:

189. Representatives of Forestry Corporation, DPI and Bioenergy Australia met representatives of the Redbank Green Energy Park proposal on 25 February 2020 where they outlined their intentions and expressed interest in bushfire damaged timber from Forestry Corporation.

190. Are you concerned about native forests being burned for energy?

ANSWER:

190. Native forests are not burned for energy. Small scale sales of residue from timber harvesting operations in plantations have been made to biomass plants for electricity production, but no sales have been made from native forests of biomass for electricity production to date. The primary product coming out of our forests remains quality timber and biomass generation only relates to the parts of the tree that have no other use so are routinely burnt on the forest floor.

191. How much “residues and thinnings” are produced across the publicly owned native forest estate each year? How much of a mature tree is considered “residue”?

ANSWER:

191. Sales by product group are detailed in the Sustainability Report on Forestry Corporation’s website. Residue is debris, limbs or parts of the tree that is not suitable for sale in any other product category.

Newry State Forest

192. Why has forestry corporation been undertaking aerial spraying in Newry State Forest?

ANSWER:

192. Forestry Corporation has carried out pre-planting weed control prior to re-establishing a recently harvested timber plantation in Newry State Forest. Weed control is completed at the beginning of a timber plantation’s 30-40 year life cycle to control pest plants like lantana and camphor laurel and allow new tree seedlings to take hold.

193. Have all sprays been guaranteed safe for the resident koala populations in this forest?

ANSWER:

193. All pesticides, including herbicides, used in Australia must be registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). Registration by the APVMA indicates that, if used according to the label directions, the product poses no risk to the environment, worker safety or public health.

194. Regarding the planned logging of Newry State Forest, why has forestry corporation not yet released specific information, such as ecology studies, soil reports or logging commencement dates?

ANSWER:

194. The reports have not yet been prepared and the operations have not yet been scheduled. Information will be released via the plan portal when it is available.

Bell Miner Associated Dieback

195. Are you aware of possible links between logging and BMAD?

ANSWER:

195. Selective harvesting for timber is only one of many activities that may impact BMAD and management actions commonly implemented by forest managers, such as controlled fuel reduction fires, are an effective means of managing this form of eucalypt dieback.

196. How much native forest in NSW is currently impacted by BMAD?

ANSWER:

196. It is currently unknown how much native forest in NSW is currently impacted by BMAD.

197. What steps are taken to ensure logging does not speed this up?

ANSWER:

197. Forestry Corporation has worked collaboratively for many years with the BMAD Working Group and the Department of Primary Industries' Forest Health Surveillance Unit to undertake extensive research to understand and address BMAD and other forms of dieback. Forestry Corporation is, in collaboration with other agencies, also developing improved methodology to monitor any changes in the extent, through remote-sensing technologies such as satellite imagery, LIDAR and multi-spectral imagery. Trials are in development to assess management actions on the prevention of dieback using actions such as cultural burning, which will contribute to the body of scientific knowledge on this issue.

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Questions from Mr Justin Field MLC

Upper Hunter Futures Report

198. Will you release the Upper Hunter Futures Report commissioned by Delliott?

a) If so, when?

ANSWER:

198(a) This decision has not been finalised.

INDUSTRY

Questions from Mr Justin Field MLC

Wood Supply Agreements

199. How many Wood Supply Agreements is Forestry Corporation currently party to in relation to its hardwood division. For each of the Wood Supply Agreement please provide (if publicly available):

- a) The date the agreement made
- b) the date the agreement expires
- c) The customer
- d) The volume of timber subject to the agreement
- e) The forestry area covered by the agreement

ANSWER:

199a to e. All major Wood Supply Agreements (WSAs) held by the Hardwood Forests Division are published on Forestry Corporation's website. This information is contained in the individual WSAs.

Force majeure declaration from bushfires

200. Was any legal advice obtained, either internal legal advice, Crown Solicitors advice or external advice, either by the Department of Regional NSW, Forestry Corporation or the Department of Primary Industries, in regards to Forestry Corporation's contractual obligations and the application of the force majeure provisions of wood supply agreements?

- a) If yes,
 - iii. was that advice made available to the EPA or the Office of the Environment Minister?
 - iv. will you publish that advice?

ANSWER:

202(a) Yes. Legal advice is subject to legal privilege.

201. Correspondence of 7 September 2020 from the Department of Regional NSW and Forestry Corporation to the CEO of the Environment Protection Authority, says:

“The Force Majeure provisions in those contracts have been enacted across all hardwood coastal supply areas. However, when FCNSW is able to operate under and comply with the CIFOA it is legally obliged to do so in order to meet supply commitments.”

- a) Other than the legal advice mentioned in question 1,
- b) What advice is being relied upon in terms of the legal obligation referred to?
- c) Does Forestry Corporation consider they have different legal obligations in regards to meeting contractual obligations in relation to logging in burnt versus unburnt forests?

ANSWER:

201a to c. Legal advice is subject to professional legal privilege.

Consulting Advice

202. In regards to the Boston Consulting Group report referred to in the hearing by Mr Barnes:

- a) who was the report offered to? Was it the Department or the Minister?
- b) will you make the report public?
- c) was this report the result of the "free consultancy" that was mentioned by Mr Barnes?
- d) when was this work started?
- e) were their terms of reference agreed with Boston Consulting Group before they commenced this work?
- f) if not, how was the focus/purpose/ of the report agreed?
- g) when was this report completed
- h) were any other Government agencies involved in preparation of this report (eg. Treasury, EES, EPA)

ANSWER:

202(a) The Department.

(b) Please visit: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-economic-development-strategies/reds-bushfire-addenda>

(c) The first tranche of REDS Bushfire Addenda were produced at no cost.

(d) 28 January 2020.

(e) Yes.

(f) N/A

(g) The first tranche were completed on 13 March 2020.

(h) Yes.

203. In regards to the "advice" referred to by Mr Gary Barnes (p19, para 17), will you publish that advice?

a) when was that advice received?

b) was that advice requested by The Department or offered by Forestry Corporation?

ANSWER:

203. Ongoing conversations have been held between DRNSW DPI and Forestry Corporation and the EPA. Forest Corporation has also published a report '2019-20 Wildfires - Environmental Impacts and Implications for Timber Harvesting in NSW State Forests'.

Sustainable Yield Report

204. In regards to the independent review of the sustainable yield report referred to by Mr Hansen on page 60 of the transcript, will this review be made public?

ANSWER:

204. Yes

205. When did the sustainable yield review commence?

ANSWER:

205. March 2020.

206. Has the sustainable yield review been submitted to the Commonwealth?

ANSWER:

206. The review will be made available to the Commonwealth when it is released.

207. How many hours of on-ground work/surveys have been completed as part of the review?

ANSWER:

207. This information has not been recorded.

208. How many hours of staff time have been allocated to the review?

ANSWER:

208. This information has not been recorded.

209. What role as the NRC had in the preparation of the review?

ANSWER:

209. The NRC was not involved in the development of the report.

Forestry Corporation Plan Portal and Protocol 1 of the Coastal Integrated Operations Approval (IFOA)

210. Does Forestry Corporation consider that, since the introduction of the IFOA, they are fulfilling the requirements of Protocol 1 of the Coastal IFOA?

ANSWER:

210. Yes.

211. Previously, harvest plans were shared with community members through monthly excel sheets that provided significant information on planned harvesting:

- a) Would Forestry Corporation agree to providing this information to the community in the interests of transparency and working in good faith with the community?

ANSWER:

211. The equivalent information to the old excel spreadsheets is provided within Forestry Corporation's plan portal under the 'reports' tab. These reports are in a similar format to Excel.

Planned post-fire logging

212. Please provide a list of hardwood coupes that Forestry Corporation intends to harvest between now and the publication of the NRC review, split in the following forestry regions:

- a) Southern
- b) Eden
- c) Lower North East
- d) Upper North East

ANSWER:

212a to d. Forestry Corporation's plan of operations is published on the Plan Portal on its website.

213. Over the next six months, is Forestry Corporation intending to harvest any 'high risk' compartments as identified in tables at the bottom of the EPA webpage 'Update on forestry operations and regulatory activities, February 2021' (found at <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/native-forestry/bushfire-affected-forestry-operations/update-february-2021>)?

- a) If so, please confirm which compartments listed?

ANSWER:

213a. Forestry Corporation's plan of operations is published on the Plan Portal on its website.

214. On the EPA webpage 'Inspections of burnt forestry operations' (found at <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/native-forestry/bushfire-affected-forestry-operations/inspections-of-burnt-forestry-operations>) under the 'summary of operations' table there is a list of 'Operations being planned by FCNSW'.

- a) Is this an accurate reflection of current planned operations by Forestry Corporation?

b) If not, please provide an update.

ANSWER:

214a to b. Forestry Corporation's plan of operations is published on the Plan Portal on its website. Forestry Corporation is currently in the process of developing plans which include a site-based risk assessment and as these plans are approved they will be published on the Plan Portal.

Logging since the bushfires

215. Since the 2019/20 Summer Bushfires, what logging of hardwood forests has occurred in the South Coast Region?

- a) Please provide each compartment name
- b) Please provide the volume of timber removed

ANSWER:

215a to b. Forestry Corporation's operations are detailed on the Plan Portal on its website. Timber volume estimates are provided in each harvest plan. Actual volumes are reconciled and published annually in Forestry Corporation's Sustainability Report.

216. Since the 2019/20 Summer Bushfires, what logging of hardwood forests has occurred in the Eden Region?

- a) Please provide each compartment name
- b) Please provide the volume of timber removed

ANSWER:

216a to b. Forestry Corporation's operations are detailed on the Plan Portal on its website. Timber volume estimates are provided in each harvest plan. Actual volumes are reconciled and published annually in Forestry Corporation's Sustainability Report.

217. Since the 2019/20 Summer Bushfires, what logging has occurred in the Lower North East Region?

- a) Please provide each compartment name
- b) Please provide how much of this is 'high' or 'very high' koala habitat
- c) Please provide the volume of timber removed

ANSWER:

217.a Forestry Corporation's operations are detailed on the Plan Portal on its website.

b) Information is not compiled in this manner. In native forest operations, koala habitat maps are accessed by planning staff during operational planning to activate the relevant prescriptions under the Coastal IFOA. Prescriptions for habitat protection are incorporated into the harvest plans for each operation. Operations in timber plantations take place in line with the Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001.

c) Timber volume estimates are provided in each harvest plan. Actual volumes are reconciled and published annually in Forestry Corporation's Sustainability Report.

218. Since the 2019/20 Summer Bushfires, what logging has occurred in the Upper North East Region?

- a) Please provide each compartment name
- b) Please provide how much of this is 'high' or 'very high' koala habitat
- c) Please provide the volume of timber removed

ANSWER:

218a. Forestry Corporation's operations are detailed on the Plan Portal on its website.

(b) Information is not compiled in this manner. In native forest operations, koala habitat maps are accessed by planning staff during operational planning to activate the relevant prescriptions under the Coastal IFOA. Prescriptions for habitat protection are incorporated into the harvest plans for each operation. Operations in timber plantations take place in line with the Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001.

(c) Timber volume estimates are provided in each harvest plan. Actual volumes are reconciled and published annually in Forestry Corporation's Sustainability Report.

Logging koala habitat

219. At any time since the bushfires, did the EPA request that Forestry Corporation put in place site specific conditions or additional protections to protect koala habitat?

- a) If so, why were these conditions not introduced?
- b) If so, what state forests did this request apply to and has the state forest been logged since the bushfires?

ANSWER:

219. Site-Specific Operating Conditions were designed to provide additional protections for the habitat of the range of species recorded in an area, including koalas.

- a) N/A
- b) Site-Specific Operating Conditions are listed on the EPA's website. Forestry Corporation's operations are detailed in its Plan Portal.

South Coast forestry employment

220. Correspondence of 7 September 2020 from the Department of Regional NSW and Forestry Corporation to the CEO of the Environment Protection Authority, says: "It is expected that 155 direct jobs are at risk of being lost over the next few months in the south coast and Eden regions."

- a) What is the specific make up of these 155 jobs? I.e. processing/harvest and haulage?
- b) How many of these 155 jobs are in hardwoods and how many in softwoods?
- c) How many jobs in the South Coast and Eden regions have been lost to date?

ANSWER:

a) This was an estimate. The estimate has since been updated as below:

	South coast	Eden	Tumut (Tumbarumba)	Total
Mills	65	74	97	236
Contractors	34	60	20	114
Forestry Corporation staff	35	27	3	65
				415

b) All of these jobs are in hardwoods.

c) Forestry Corporation does not employ harvest and haulage contractors or timber processors but understands that a small number of jobs have been lost at a processing facility that has reduced shifts. Some supply of timber has continued from private property operations and contractors have been kept working on these as well as make safe works following the fires. This has temporarily mitigated any significant impact on jobs.

221. Regarding the 224 jobs referred to by Mr Barnes on page 65 of the transcript, what is the specific make up of the 224 jobs?

- a) How many of these are hardwoods?
- b) What is the breakdown in terms of processing/harvest and haulage?
- c) what analysis is this 224 jobs drawn from?
- d) will the Department publish that analysis?

ANSWER:

221(a) - (d). The estimated 224 jobs refer to the number of jobs that may have been impacted across the broader economy (including non-timber sector) due to the known stand down of 74 harvest and haulage jobs and 6 jobs at a sawmill in the region. These have been reported to the Department by the industry. The potential multiplier impact is based on economic research conducted by Australian National University.]

222. Which South Coast communities was Mr Barnes referring to when he described some as "one trick ponies" on page 65 of the transcript?

ANSWER:

222. The Far South Coast Functional Economic Region includes industry specialisations in agriculture (especially dairy), forestry, and fishing. Businesses in these sectors were disproportionately impacted by bushfires. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-economic-development-strategies/reds-bushfire-addenda>

Forestry hardwoods employment

223. Publicly available employment data provided by Forestry Corporation in the annual report or similar documentation does not disclose employment figures in hardwood forests. For the Southern Region:

- a) How many direct hardwood processing jobs exist?
- b) How many direct hardwood harvest and haulage jobs exist?

ANSWER:

223. Forestry Corporation's staff numbers are reported in its Annual Report. Forestry Corporation does not run mills or carry out harvest and haulage operations.

224. For the Eden Region:

- a) How many direct hardwood processing jobs exist?
- b) How many direct hardwood harvest and haulage jobs exist?

ANSWER:

224a to b. Forestry Corporation's staff numbers are reported in its Annual Report. Forestry Corporation does not run mills or carry out harvest and haulage operations.

225. For the Lower North East Region:

- a) How many direct hardwood processing jobs exist?
- b) How many direct hardwood harvest and haulage jobs exist?

ANSWER:

225a to b. Forestry Corporation's staff numbers are reported in its Annual Report. Forestry Corporation does not run mills or carry out harvest and haulage operations.

226. For the Upper North East Region:

- a) How many direct hardwood processing jobs exist?
- b) How many direct hardwood harvest and haulage jobs exist?

ANSWER:

226a to b. Forestry Corporation's staff numbers are reported in its Annual Report. Forestry Corporation does not run mills or carry out harvest and haulage operations.

EPBC independent review

227. Professor Graeme Samuel AC provided the Final Report of the Independent Review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) in January 2021 (found at <https://epbcactreview.environment.gov.au/resources/final-report>). Recommendation 15 of the report provided that states should immediately ensure that Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) are consistent with the National Environmental Standards

(a) as a party to the Regional Forest Agreements, has the NSW Government considered the implications of this recommendation?

ANSWER:

227(a). NSW will not pre-empt the Commonwealth's response to the report and its recommendations, but expects to be consulted (along with the other RFA jurisdictions) by the Commonwealth while developing its formal response. In the interim, NSW and the Commonwealth remain committed to Regional Forest Agreements.

Forestry Corporation Annual Reports

228. For the 2019/20 financial year what was the Forestry Corporation's profit/loss from its native forestry operations?

ANSWER:

228. The financial performance of the Hardwood Forests Division is detailed in Forestry Corporation's Annual Report.

229. For each of (1) native forests and (2) hardwood plantations in North East NSW (Upper and Lower North East Regional Forestry Agreement regions) for the 2019/20 financial year:

- a) what were the commitments in Wood Supply Agreements for each of Large High Quality Sawlogs, Small High Quality Sawlogs, Veneer Logs, Girders, Piles, Poles and other timber (in cubic metres)?
- b) what were the yields for each of Large High Quality Sawlogs, Small High Quality Sawlogs, Veneer Logs, Girders, Piles, Poles and other timber (in cubic metres)?

ANSWER:

229a to b. Forestry Corporation's Wood Supply Agreements for the Hardwood Forests Division are published on its website. Wood Supply Agreements are for hardwood timber, which is sourced from both hardwood plantations and native forests. Timber yield by product is published in Forestry Corporation's Sustainability Report.

230. The 2019-20 Forestry Corporation Annual Report identifies that more than 50% of the Hardwood forests were impacted by the fires, some 5,000 hectares of hardwood plantations and 831,000 hectares of native forests, was burnt resulting in a significant write-down of these assets on the balance sheet, the pine plantations were estimated to have a \$371 million reduction in biological asset value, yet it is stated that the hardwood division do not recognise biological asset values, why is standing tree value of native forests and hardwood plantations not recognised in the financial statements and the significant fire losses accounted for?

ANSWER:

230. The hardwood forests assets have been impaired in line with the Corporation's accounting policies.

231. The annual report identifies that the bushfires resulted in substantial infrastructure damage to roads and bridges with the best estimate of repair costs as between \$100 - \$200 million, the majority of which relates to the Hardwood division, yet the accounts only account for \$1 million in softwood plantation infrastructure asset losses as the hardwood division either do not recognise or have fully impaired infrastructure assets, why are road and other infrastructure assets of native forests and hardwood plantations not recognised in the financial statements and the significant fire losses accounted for?

ANSWER:

231. Refer to answer to Question 230.

232. In the last financial year did the Forestry Corporation rely upon force majeure to not fulfil Wood Supply Agreement commitments? If so what volumes of each product were involved for each forestry region? Will the Forestry Corporation use force majeure to reduce Wood Supply Agreement commitments down to the estimated long-term sustainable yield since the fires?

ANSWER:

232. Forestry Corporation did not fulfil some of its Wood Supply Agreement commitments after notifying a force majeure event. Contract performance is measured on a financial year basis.

The long-term sustainable yield review has not been completed and consideration will be given to the impact on commitments when this review is complete. Wood Supply Agreement terms are shorter than the term of estimated long-term sustainable yield calculations.

233. For each of the past 5 years how much money have the NSW and Federal Governments paid to the Forestry Corporation for community service obligations, grants or other payments related to native forests and hardwood plantations?

ANSWER:

233. Community Service Obligation grants are a fee for service for the management of public land. The grant is paid by the NSW Government. Community Service Obligation grant income received is detailed in Forestry Corporation's Annual Report.

234. What profit/loss did the Forestry Corporation make on its:

- a) native forest operations for the 2019-20 financial year
- b) hardwood plantation operations for the 2019-20 financial year?

ANSWER:

234. The financial performance of the Hardwood Forests Division is detailed in Forestry Corporation's Annual Report. Hardwood plantations are managed as part of the Hardwood Forests Division and not accounted for separately.

235. What is the projected profit/loss for

- a) native forest operations for the 2020-21 financial year
- b) hardwood plantation operations for the 2020-21 financial year?

ANSWER:

235. The total Hardwood Forests Division carries substantial fire-related expenditure for the 2020-21 year. Hardwood plantations are managed as part of the Hardwood Forests Division and not accounted for separately.

236. For each of the past 5 years how much money have the NSW and Federal Governments paid to sawmillers, logging companies or transport companies for mill upgrades, transport subsidies, and the like, for that portion of their operations related to public native forests?

ANSWER:

236. Statistics of this nature are not categorised in respect of public native forestry as distinct from other groups within the forestry sector, so the requested breakdown is not available. Details on Commonwealth Government funding should be sought from the Commonwealth.

Information on successful forestry industry development projects (as part of the NSW Government's Sector Development Grants) announced in November 2020 have been published on the Department of Regional NSW website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw>).

Verdant Technologies Australia

237. Verdant Technologies Australia (previously Hunter Energy) recently advertised for expressions of interest for forest residues from harvesting and thinning as fuel for their Redbank Power Station, has or will the Forestry Corporation tender an expression of interest? What volumes of timber have or will they offer to Hunter Energy from each Forestry Region? Will the Forestry Corporation be tendering to truck the timber to the power plant, or a central collection point, or would it be available for collection in the forest?

a) What price(s) per tonne have or will the Forestry Corporation be tendering?

ANSWER:

237a. Forestry Corporation has not participated in this expressions of interest process.