

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 9
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division
Topic: Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement
Hansard Page: 106
Question Date: 24 February 2014
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Urquhart asked:

Senator URQUHART: Before the election, the government stated that it would honour existing and committed contracts under the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement. Can you update the committee on whether all these contracts have been honoured—more broadly, spending the \$330 million under the 2013 IGA on track as budgeted?

Mr Thompson: We might take on the notice the particulars of whether those individual commitments are still being honoured. But you are right, Senator, in saying that the government did commit to honour existing commitments. The reason I am taking it on notice is that, as I have indicated before, under the intergovernmental agreement there is a whole series of lines of different commitments. Could I answer that properly on notice?

Senator URQUHART: If you can take that on notice, that would be great.

Answer:

The status of Commonwealth funding under the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement 2013 is provided in the table below.

Programme	Funding (QoN update)
Employment and training support for forest workers in Tasmania made redundant as a result of the downturn in the native forest industry.	Up to \$25m. \$4.5m remaining until 2015-16. Contracts in place. <i>(administered by Department of Employment)</i>
Mental health counselling and community well-being services delivered by Rural Alive and Well, for forest workers and contractors, their families and associated businesses adversely affected by the current forestry industry changes.	\$1.0m Commonwealth funding from 2013-14 to 2014-15. Contract in place. <i>(administered by Department of Health)</i>
Voluntary exits for native forest haulage, harvest and silvicultural contractors affected by the forest industry downturn wanting to exit the industry.	\$45m. Fully spent. <i>(administered by Department of Agriculture)</i>
Assistance to the Tasmanian Government to implement the 2011 IGA	\$28m. Fully spent. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Tasmanian Native Forests High Quality Sawlog Contract Voluntary Buyback Program to assist sawmillers holding long-term contracts with Forestry Tasmania for high quality sawlogs to surrender part of its contracts or exit	\$15m. Fully spent. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i>

Programme	Funding (QoN update)
the native forest industry.	<i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Conservation management of additional reserve areas, including for fire control, weed and pest management etc.	\$32m - with \$7m paid under the 2011 IGA and \$7m paid under the 2013 IGA. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Tasmanian Jobs and Growth Plan to provide funding for projects that support regional economic diversification, jobs and growth in Tasmania	\$100m. As at 13 March 2014, projects with total grant values of \$12.86m (GST exclusive) have been approved by the Government, with one of these projects under contract with a value of \$3.5m (GST excusive). <i>(administered by Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development)</i>
Regional Sawmiller Structural Adjustment Program to assist regional sawmillers facing hardship as a result of the downturn in the industry restructures their business or exit the industry.	\$10m. Provided to Tasmanian Government. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Support for workers and contractor businesses affected by the restructuring of the native forest industry.	\$20m. Provided to Tasmanian Government. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Plantation Manufacturing Innovation and Investment Fund (PMIIF) for projects to encourage innovation and investment in the timber industry as it transitions to a greater reliance on plantation timber.	On 3 August 2013, the \$15.8m program was announced. No decisions have been made and there are no contracts in place. <i>(administered by Department of Industry)</i>
Investigation and implementation of sustainable solutions for more efficient use of harvesting and processing forest timber residues	\$13.5m. \$5.5m spent. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Support for the Special Council to oversee implementation and durability of the TFA, including support for communications and achievement of FSC certification	\$3m. \$1m spent. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
Support for the development of a national Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification scheme.	\$0.5m. Contracted. <i>(administered by Department of Agriculture)</i>
Support for World Heritage extension planning and development of a contemporary management plan for the property.	\$1.5m. Provided to Tasmanian Government. <i>(administered by Department of Environment)</i> <i>(payment to Tasmanian Government)</i>
TOTAL	\$338m