



COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH

Level 1, 117 Great Eastern Highway
RIVERVALE 6103

Phone: (08) 9475 8888

Fax: (08) 9475 8899

Email: paul.semple@fpc.wa.gov.au

Media statement

FPC plantations damaged by fire

The Forest Product Commission (FPC) has estimated the damage from a fire which swept through more than 2,500 hectares of pine trees near Yanchep at approximately \$100million to industry and \$10million in stumpage value to the State Government.

FPC General Manager, Dr Paul Biggs, praised fire crews for their outstanding efforts in bringing the blaze under control, despite having to contend with searing heat and strong winds.

Dr Biggs, who conducted an aerial inspection this morning, said it was a grim feeling to see how the environment had suffered so badly.

“The trees are aged between 15 and 57 years and what is left of them can accurately be described as ‘black poles’. More than 250,000 tonnes of softwood timber, or enough to supply industry for 12 months, was damaged in the blaze.

“Our priority now is to commence salvage operations as soon as practicable in a bid to recover saleable timber however, the fire is the most costly we have experienced.

“Damage to the plantation should not cause major delays in the supply of softwood to industry, but we will consult regularly with our customers over the next few months to make sure they are kept informed of developments,” Dr Biggs said.

At Bridgetown, more than 68 hectares of the FPC’s *Pinus radiata* plantation was destroyed.

“We will get on with planting more trees, but without doubt our thoughts at this time are with those Bridgetown families who lost everything when their homes were razed,” said Dr Biggs.

For more information contact:

Paul Semple

Communications Branch

Phone: 9475 8888 or 0438 858 850