

Women in Timber Conference

ABOUT 10 CALM staff were among 100 people to attend the inaugural *Women in Timber* conference hosted by the Forest Protection Society at the WACA in July.

Keynote speaker Robyn Loydell, National Director of the Forest Protection Society, said that women are the key to better communication on forest issues.

"For far too long the timber industry has been represented by grey-haired men in suits who have failed to convince the community at large that the timber industry is responding to community concerns over forests."

She went on to say that women and families are deeply affected by the controversy that rages in the community over forest issues, and yet their views are largely represented by men.

"Urban women in particular fail to relate to a consistently male-dominated viewpoint on forest issues.

"We have the best managed forests in the world, and a tremendous contribution to make to the Australian community environmentally, socially and economically.

"However, unless we communicate our message more effectively to the wider community, our future will still be at the



Enjoying a break in the Women in Timber Conference are, at rear, Therese Jones, Penny Walsh, Caroline (Liney) Bronx, Taryn Linning and Tammie Reid. At front is Donna Green, Annie Greig and Sharon Rouse.

Photo courtesy Forest Protection Society.

mercy of opportunist politicians.

Other speakers at the conference were CALM's Tammie Reid, Community Education Officer at Dwellingup, and Donna Green, Silviculture Officer at Walpole.

In her presentation, Tammie looked at how CALM seeks to increase awareness, understanding and support for forest management in Western Australia.

She covered the set-up of the Department and its basic goals, strategies and

key areas of operation.

She also gave participants an idea of the complexities involved in working within an integrated management agency like CALM, and provided an intriguing hands-on tour of the eucalypt leaf.

Donna Green looked at the processes involved in preparing an area for timber harvesting, covering issues such as surrounding land use, exclusion zones, potential logging areas, apiary sites, landscape values, dieback status and harvesting methods.

She stressed that the most important element of preparation was public consultation, and explained how CALM invites community input and responds to concerns.

Another key aspect of the conference covered media relations and involved a panel of experts from radio, newspaper and TV, with each giving a run-down of their own medium, and providing tips on how the forestry industry could best use it.

Conference Chairperson and WA Coordinator

of the Forest Protection Society, Trish Townsend, said the inaugural *Women in Timber* conference was an outstanding success.

"The enthusiasm and commitment of the women who participated in this conference is tremendously encouraging and can only be good news for the future of the forest industries in Western Australia, and indeed the whole country."

It is planned that the *Women in Timber* conference will become an annual event.