

FIREWOOD FALLING OPERATIONS

MUNDARING DIVISION

by N. K. James

Approximately 20% of the men employed by the Department at Mundaring are engaged on firewood falling (which is a recoupable project). This represents twelve men, including two Overseers.

These gangs work independently, one in the Eastern, and one in the Western portion of the Division. The gang operating in the Eastern area, follows closely behind the Charcoal Iron Steel Industry (Wundowie) bush operations. The Main reason for this being that the firewood on the ground (that is green mill tops) will dry out, and be ready for sale, at the same time as that being felled. The tops are burnt and the wood left to dry for three to four years. At the present time Wundowie are only able to burn completely dry wood.

The faller operates a Dennis Twin Circular Saw. The trees are felled, so as to leave a stump no more than three to six inches above ground level. This is to ensure that coppice re-growth is of a good standard. The height of the stump after falling is of course, in some cases, determined by the type of terrain. The yield per acre varies from 15 tons to 50 tons. Average yield would be about 25 tons per acre.

The tree marking to date, has been done by a F/Ranger or F/Guard. Trees which are considered unsuitable for milling purposes, or which have no future potential, are marked.

With the Charcoal Iron Steel Industry at Wundowie consuming approximately 400 tons daily for 7 days a week, it can be readily seen that an enormous quantity of firewood will be needed in the future. At the present time Wundowie obtain the bulk of their requirements from private property, but supply from this source will not last many years. Therefore large quantities of firewood will be required from the State Forest within a few years.

Supplies of firewood for brick kilns, wood yards, etc., are also in heavy demand, and we have one gang falling for that purpose.

-----