

## ROTATION BURNING IN THE KARRI - WHY NOT?

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by George Peet

After discussion with Southern officers, and seeing the fantastic concentration of fuel in much of the karri forest, one cannot but be highly impressed by the problems facing these officers in establishing intensive fire protection in the karri.

The main problem will be to get the initial burn over the area, so why not a major effort to surmount this first hurdle in the near future?

I fail to see any question as to whether or not it can be done, as there is ample evidence to suggest that it can. Excellent burns have been carried out in the karri, of equal quality to the best burns achieved in the jarrah. These burns have been done; therefore the same quality burn can be done again, and on a much larger scale, if the men and equipment are available to carry them out. I suggest that it would be possible to make the men and equipment available from the northern divisions.

The Spring burning season is generally earlier in the Jarrah Zone than the Karri. When conditions are suitable in the Karri, many of the Jarrah divisions will be tailing off their burning programme. It should be possible for each of these northern divisions to make a gang available to go south and assist with the karri programme. This would mean a big increase in the karri work force for a period, and to utilize it fully the areas would require advance preparation, i.e. cutting of working lanes, tracks cleaned up etc. As well as having men, the northern divisions also have tractors, and surely a number of these could be spared for a couple of months during the summer to complete this preparation.

Conceding that this programme would curtail projects in the north, the proportions of the protection problem in the karri surely warrant this effort. After all, one must consider the possibility of a fire starting in 20 ton to the acre fuel, covered by highly inflammable scrub, on a dangerous day and driven by a 30 mph wind. What's to stop it?-----The SEA would be my bet.

Once the initial burn is completed over the whole area, the problem must surely be considerably lessened. The walking lanes will have been established and should be capable of re-location for the next burn by the different levels of scrub. The fuel quantity will be much less, hence amenable to a wider range of burning conditions. If these points are conceded, then why not a concerted effort by all divisions, to get this problem broken in the next few years.

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