



# Annual Harvesting and Regeneration Report 2017/18

**2013/14 to 2017/18  
Final Report**

September 2018

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## Introduction and Summary

The Annual Harvesting and Regeneration Report has been developed by VicForests to demonstrate to the Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) how VicForests has met its obligations under section 15 of the *Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004*, whereby VicForests must carry out its functions in accordance with the Allocation Order.

The Allocation Order (AO) is made by the Minister for Agriculture under Part 3 of the *Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004*.

The objectives of an AO are to:

- Allocate specified timber resources in State forests to VicForests for the purposes of harvesting and selling, or harvesting or selling timber resources;
- Permit VicForests to undertake associated management activities in relation to that allocated timber and in the areas to which the order applies (e.g. construction of access roads, regeneration activities, thinning and monitoring); and
- Specify relevant conditions and limitations (e.g. minimum planning and reporting requirements, and the maximum five-year harvest area limits)

The current AO is the Allocation (Amendment) Order 2014, published in the Victorian Government Gazette No S 405 on 30 October 2014, which updated provisions set out in the Allocation Order 2013. The Allocation Order 2013 replaced the Allocation to VicForests Order 2004 which covered the period 1 August 2004 to 31 September 2013.

This report specifically addresses Clause 18 of the Allocation (Amendment) Order 2014, whereby VicForests must submit an annual report to the Secretary of DEDJTR by September 30 each year, describing the area of timber harvested and regeneration results of the preceding financial year for Ash and Mixed Species forest stand types. The report must also include data demonstrating how VicForests is complying with the AO 5-year harvest area limit (as shown in item 3 of Table 1, of the Allocation (Amendment) Order 2014).

The 2017/18 report represents the fifth and final year of the annual process to report the area of harvest, regeneration results and to demonstrate compliance with the 5-year harvest limits imposed by the Allocation (Amendment) Order 2014. In addition to these requirements, VicForests has included an annual summary of other authorised activities undertaken in 2017/18.

In 2017/18, VicForests commenced harvesting in 236 Timber Release Plan (TRP) coupes (excludes roadline improvement and roadline construction coupes), attributing a further 1,988 hectares of AO Gross Coupe Area to the Ash forest type and a further 3,638 hectares of the AO Gross Coupe Area to Mixed Species forest type from their respective 5-year area limits.

In total, VicForests has harvested 80% of the Ash Forest 5-year area limit and 20% of the Mixed Species Forest 5-year area limit. These figures are below the maximum 5-year harvesting limits in the fifth and final year of this 5-year period and hence demonstrate VicForests' compliance with the current Allocation Order.

VicForests 2017/18 season also comprised a net harvest from TRP coupes of 702 hectares from Clear-felling, 1,989 hectares from Seed-tree and 354 hectares from Regrowth Retention. A total of 135 hectares comprised solely of stand tending activities such as thinning or single-tree selection silviculture.

In undertaking our annual regeneration responsibilities, VicForests proposed for finalisation a further 5,065 hectares of gross coupe area, comprising 146 coupes assessed as being successfully regenerated or otherwise stocked.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "N. Trushell".

**Nathan Trushell**

Chief Executive Officer, VicForests

## Objectives

The objectives of the VicForests Annual Harvesting and Regeneration Report are to provide information on:

1. VicForests' area harvested in 2017/18;
2. VicForests' compliance with the Allocation Order 5-year harvest limits;
3. VicForests' regeneration results for 2017/18; and
4. A summary of VicForests' other authorised activities undertaken in 2017/18.

## Area of Timber Harvested

Two types of area harvested results will be reported; they are the AO Gross Coupe Area and the Net Harvest Area.

### 1.1 AO Gross Coupe Area

The AO Gross Coupe Area is the total coupe area (a gross area) of a coupe where timber harvesting has commenced in that coupe, reported by the year harvesting first commenced relative to the 5-year AO period.

The AO Gross Coupe Area is the area measurement that is used for comparison with the five-year harvest area limits listed in the AO. The five year harvest limit period is from 2013/14 to 2017/18.

The AO Gross Coupe Area result includes both harvested and un-harvested areas. The area not harvested will contain areas potentially available for timber harvest and areas unavailable for harvest – usually because of *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014* exclusions or reserves created by VicForests.

This AO Gross Coupe Area is classified into either Ash or Mixed Species forest stand types to identify what proportion of the coupes have been tallied against each of the 5-year harvest area limits.

**Table 1** indicates that at the end of the 2017/18 financial year, a total of xxx hectares had been attributed to the Ash Forest 5-year area limit and xxx hectares was attributed to the Mixed Species 5-year area limit. **Figure 1** demonstrates VicForests' compliance with the 5-year limits is being monitored.

Table 1 2017/18 AO Gross Coupe Area and five-year harvest limit by forest stand type

Forest Stand Type	AO Five-year harvest limit (Hectares)	2013/14 AO Coupe Area (Hectares)	2014/15 AO Coupe Area (Hectares)	2015/16 AO Coupe Area (Hectares)	2016/17 AO Coupe Area (Hectares)	2017/18 AO Coupe Area (Hectares)	Cumulative AO Area (Period 2013-2018) (Hectares)	% AO 5-Year Harvest Limit Utilised
<b>Ash</b>	14,200	2,090	2,273	2,583	2,386	1,988	<b>11,319</b>	80%
<b>Mixed Species</b>	70,000	2,034	2,820	2,847	3,003	3,638	<b>14,344</b>	20%
<b>Notes:</b>								
<i>The area of harvest operations to be included in the comparison with the five-year area limits in the AO are; clear-fell, clear-fell salvage, seed tree (includes retained over-wood), regrowth retention harvesting and uneven-aged silviculture methods.</i>								
<i>Thinning type harvesting is considered tending operations and are not included in this comparison with the AO five-year harvest limits as specified in Clause 11 of the Allocation Order 2013.</i>								
<i>The total area of a coupe is tallied towards the five-year area limits in the Allocation Order when harvesting first commences in that coupe. Where timber harvesting occurs over more than one year or over more than one 5-year period of the AO, the AO Coupe Area will be tallied to the first year and first period in which harvesting first commenced.</i>								
<i>The forest stand type has been determined using the spatial file "Working_forest_area_2013.shp", as supplied to VicForests.</i>								

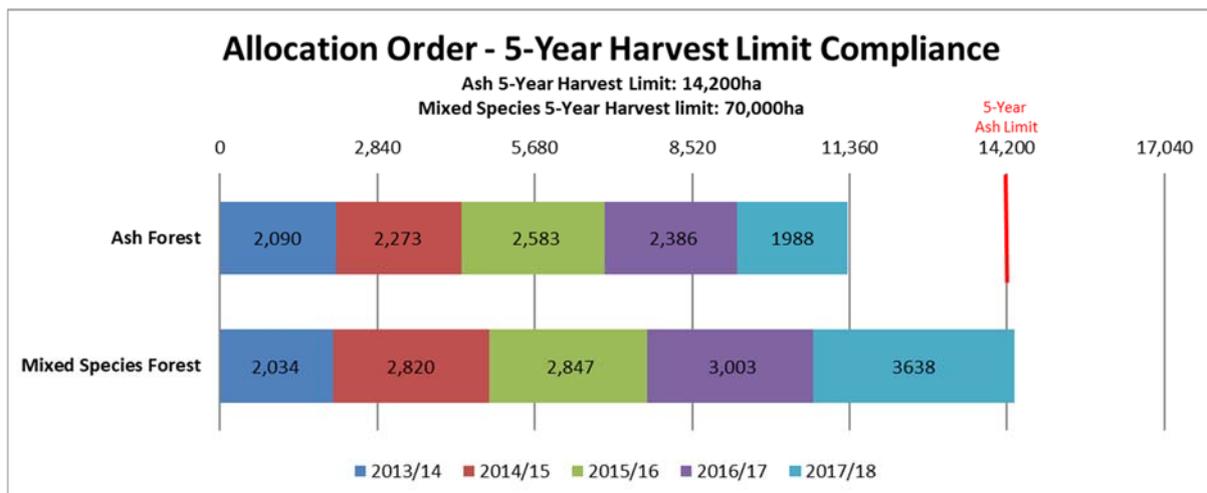


Figure 1. VicForests AO Compliance Monitoring Chart (Mixed Species 5-year limit not shown).

## 1.2 Net Harvest Area

To provide a comparison with the AO Coupe Area, the actual harvest area (the net area), will also be reported. This is the area harvested using each silviculture system reported (excluding stand tending activities) in VicForests' annual Sustainability Report, broken down into Ash and Mixed Species forest stand types.

The net areas harvested by these silviculture systems will lead to a requirement for the harvested area to be regenerated as the majority of trees are removed from the site.

**Table 2** outlines the area of timber harvesting undertaken by VicForests during the 2017/18 year, by silviculture system and by forest stand type.

Table 2 2017/18 Net Harvest Area (ha) by silviculture system and forest stand type

Forest Stand Type	Clear felling	Seed-Tree	Regrowth Retention Harvesting	TOTALS
Ash	575.0	20.1	343.8	<b>938.9</b>
Mixed Species	127.0	1,969.3	9.7	<b>2,106.0</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>702.0</b>	<b>1,989.4</b>	<b>353.5</b>	<b>3,044.9</b>
<b>Notes:</b>				
<i>This data is sourced from VicForests 2017-18 Harvesting History Shapefile – supplied as attachment 1 with this submission.</i>				

## Annual Regeneration Results

Successful regeneration of a coupe is termed 'coupe finalisation' and can only be demonstrated when the entire net harvested area of a coupe has been adequately re-stocked with seedlings, usually established by sowing seed after the completion of a regeneration burn.

The annual regeneration program consists of preparing sites where timber harvesting has occurred (site preparation), the establishment of eucalypt seedlings across the net harvested areas (site establishment) and a series of seedling stocking surveys to measure regeneration success.

Coupes that have been surveyed and demonstrated to have adequate stocking of the eucalypt species that were present prior to timber harvesting are then nominated for coupe finalisation. Coupes nominated during 2017/18 are shown in Table 3.

## 2.1 Coupes Nominated for Coupe Finalisation

Table 3 VicForests' coupes nominated for finalisation during 2017/18.

Coupe Types	Even-Aged Coupes	Thinning Coupes	Roadline Coupes	TOTALS
<b>Number of Coupes Finalised</b>	139	5	2	146
<b>Gross Coupe Area Finalised (ha)</b>	4,722	326	17	5,065
<b>Net Area Harvested and Finalised (ha)</b>	2,535	101	2	2,638

Additional information on coupes which VicForests has nominated for finalisation in 2017/18 has been supplied in attachment 2 - *VicForests 2017-18 Coupe Finalisation list*.

## Other Authorised Activities

This section outlines associated management activities undertaken by VicForests during the 2017/18 year as authorised within Clause 10 of the Allocation Order 2013, which includes activities such as seed collection and stand-tending.

### 3.1 Seed Collection

Seed collection is undertaken annually to maintain adequate seed-stock to facilitate future site establishment of harvested areas.

Table 4 shows the amount of seed collected by VicForests during the 2017/18 year by forest type and method of collection.

Table 4 Seed collection by species group completed by VicForests during 2017/18.

Forest Stand Type	Seed Collection Amount (Kilograms)		
	Ground Collection	Climbing	Total
<b>Ash Species</b>	84.0	28.6	<b>112.6</b>
<b>Mixed Species</b>	1,177.7	113.3	<b>1,291.0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,261.7</b>	<b>141.9</b>	<b>1,403.6</b>
<b>Notes:</b>			
<i>The data in this table is sourced from VicForests' Seed-bank database.</i>			
<i>All figures are in kilograms.</i>			
<i>Ash species includes Alpine Ash, Mountain Ash and Shining Gum. All other species are considered as mixed species.</i>			

### 3.2 Stand Tending

Forest stand tending incorporates activity undertaken to manage or manipulate a forest stand while continuing to let the stand grow. Table 5 shows the net areas of stand tending activity undertaken by VicForests during the 2017/18 year.

Table 5 The area (ha) of stand tending activities by forest stand type undertaken in 2017/18.

Forest Stand Type	Thinning from Above	Thinning from Below	Single-Tree Selection	TOTALS
Ash	-	-	-	-
Mixed Species	-	82.0	53.4	135.4
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>82.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>135.4</b>
<b>Notes:</b>				
<i>The data in this table is sourced from VicForests' 2017-18 Harvesting History Shapefile, which is included with this submission.</i>				

## Corrections to previous VicForests' Annual Harvesting and Regeneration Reports

VicForests' has identified some immaterial errors within previous harvesting history year data that will not affect VicForests' reported compliance with the Allocation Order area limits. These errors will be amended and the updated data will be provided to the Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources when completed.

## Attachments

The following attachments also form part of VicForests' Annual Harvesting and Regeneration Report (as previously indicated):

1. VicForests' 2017-18 Harvesting History Shapefile, including the following components:
  - a. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.dbf
  - b. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.prj
  - c. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.sbn
  - d. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.sbx
  - e. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.shp
  - f. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.xml
  - g. VF\_Harvesting\_History\_201718.shx
2. VicForests' 2017-18 Coupe Finalisation List