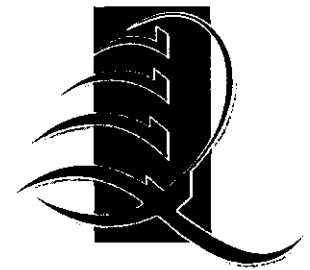


Our ref:rm:ld:may004

4 May 2007

Hon. Lindy Nelson-Carr MP
Minister for Environment
Multiculturalism
P O Box 15155
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Hon. Tim Mulherin MP
Minister for Primary Industries
and Fisheries
G P O Box 46
BRISBANE QLD 4001



**TIMBER
QUEENSLAND**

Dear Ministers,

RE: Forest Access

A public statement released by your offices on Thursday 3 May 2007 indicating that visitor access to State forests will be eased in order to encourage the public to access State forests is an issue of significant and major concern to Queensland's \$2.4 billion per annum timber industry and the safety of the many forest workers who comprise part of the 20,000+ people employed by our industry.

We have consistently argued with forest agencies, managers and others that working forests, particularly plantation forests, are our workplace and we take the safety of our workers in the workplace and that of people who enter the workplace seriously. This policy does nothing to promote or support that workplace safety, and in the view of Queensland's timber industry, is likely to result in additional workplace hazards that could lead to injury or even death.

The issues surrounding access to forests, particularly plantation forests that are used for harvesting purposes, has been clearly defined in communication to various Government Departments over recent times.

Plantation forests are not particularly pretty places for recreational activities. Infact the trees have been planted for the purpose of timber production, and whilst it may be reasonable not to encourage people to become too close to harvesting areas, the network of forestry roads leading to and from those harvesting areas traversed by log trucks and other machinery could wind for many many kilometres beyond the harvesting site itself.

Before industry and indeed your forest managers allow people to enter forest areas certain conditions of briefing and safety are required. In our industry we require people to wear hard hats, high visibility vests and to announce their intention on the UHF radio network so that other users in the forest, particularly log trucks, are aware of other traffic on forestry roads. Encouraging visitors to willy-nilly cruise around forests, stop where they like and do what they wish will ultimately result in serious injury or death.

Timber Queensland Ltd

Abn 692 086 750 Ash 20 092 086 750

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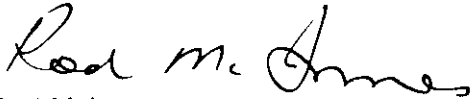
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Our industry takes this matter so seriously we are prepared to mount a significant campaign around this matter going forward, unless the Government is prepared to reconsider its position with respect to endangering our workers and the public at large by encouraging visitations to plantation and working native forests. It is our view that as our industry progressively moves towards a reliance principally on plantation and privately owned forests, that there are many millions of hectares of natural forests under the Government control that could be used for all sorts of visitor recreation purposes quite safely.

It is in everybody's interests that this matter is revisited immediately.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rod McInnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rod McInnes
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE

Government forest access policy will endanger lives – Ministers will have blood on their hands

A recent announcement from Ministers Mulherin (Primary Industries) and Nelson-Carr (Environment) to provide unfettered public access to State forests will endanger the lives of not only the public but forestry workers as well says forest industry peak body Timber Queensland.

Timber Queensland's CEO Rod McInnes said "This is a crazy policy to encourage the public to roam willy-nilly through State forests including plantation forests without appropriate controls".

"Plantation forests, like mining sites, cane farms and other cropping activities are workplaces and access should be restricted and controlled as it is currently" Mr McInnes continued.

"Our industry has been engaged in developing forest harvesting safety codes together with the Government to ensure the safety of our industry workers. Forest harvesting is a dangerous business and the last thing we want is for members of the public to stumble into a harvesting area and be maimed or killed" Mr McInnes went on to say.

"Plantation roads carry log trucks and other machinery to and from harvesting areas often well away from harvesting sites on roads not designed for public access. One hates to think what will happen when 40 tonnes of log truck on a single lane road emerges from the dust to find a tourist stopped in the middle of the road reading a map or somesuch".

"What's next – encouraging the public to take a drive down an open-cut mine!" Mr McInnes said.

"Queensland's \$2.4 billion per annum timber industry and its 20,000+ workers deserve better from this Government. The Government is locking up native forests and forcing us into plantations and is now supporting dangerous and unsafe workplaces".

"The Government should review this policy and return to controlled access to working forests before someone is killed. There are plenty of locked up natural forests far prettier and more pristine than industrial wood production forests for recreation" Mr McInnes concluded.

**Media enquiries to: Rod McInnes on (07) 3254 1989 / 0419 704 028
4 May 2007**

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Joint Statement:

**Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries
The Honourable Tim Mulherin**

**Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism
The Honourable Lindy Nelson-Carr**

Thursday, May 03, 2007

ACCESS EASED TO STATE FORESTS

Visiting Queensland's 3.4 million hectares of State forest and State plantation forest is about to become easier as permit requirements are progressively removed for many private recreational four-wheel drivers, motorcycle riders, cyclists and horse riders.

Environment Minister Lindy Nelson-Carr and Primary Industries and Fisheries Minister Tim Mulherin said the new arrangements would be put in place as signs go up around the state over the coming weeks.

People conducting commercial activities or group and competitive events will still need a permit, but the vast majority of private visitors will not.

Ms Nelson-Carr said that by removing the need for a permit, the Queensland Government was reducing red tape for forest users and reducing unnecessary government expense.

"Our State forests provide a wide range of recreational opportunities for visitors, including four-wheel driving, horse riding, bushwalking and picnicking, and this change will make it easier for people to visit these areas," Ms Nelson Carr said.

"Over the coming months the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service will be progressively erecting signs at many State forest entrance points to show where access is allowed without a permit."

Mr Mulherin said he was delighted to exempt individual forest users from the need to obtain a permit to traverse Queensland's 300,000 hectares of State plantation forests.

He said plantation forests offered a range of recreational opportunities from car rallies to photography, mountain biking, walking and hiking.

However, Mr Mulherin said the public should remember that plantation forests were working forests.

"Roads may be closed to the public during bad weather or when there's a risk to the public from commercial activities.

"Around 2 million cubic metres of plantation-grown timber are harvested from Forestry Plantations Queensland's forests every year and that equates to around 120,000 semi-trailer trips to and from the forests.

"These huge semis have very limited manoeuvrability, and forest visitors must give way to them and comply with any restricted access or road closed signs," he said.

Ms Nelson-Carr said not every track will be open and the public still needed to heed the

rules and regulations that applied when entering State forests.

“Particularly, drivers of motor vehicles must hold a current driver’s licence and the motor vehicle must be registered.

“Visitors to State forests and State plantation forests must also comply with all signs and road rules; drive cautiously, keep to formed roads and drive to prevailing road conditions; and be mindful that forest roads are often unsealed, narrow and winding.

Information about conditions of access for all forest visitors and permit requirements for people conducting commercial and group activities are available from Forestry Plantations Queensland at www.fpq.qld.gov.au or from your nearest Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service office.

Media contact: Karla Steen (Ms Nelson-Carr’s office) 3336 8004 or David Potter (Mr Mulherin’s office) 3239 6530