

## Campi Bulk Transport Pty Ltd

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13<sup>th</sup> October, 2009  
Forest Assessment  
Forest Assessment Commission  
GPO Box 4206  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Commissioner,

### RE: RED GUM FOREST ASSESSMENT

I am writing to you in relation to the natural resource inquiries currently undergoing on the red gum forests.

My company has been transporting red gum timber for the last 20 years. I also hold a firewood allocation in partnership with Bradley Campi with whom I have worked in conjunction with during my 20 years of business in this industry. My company transports firewood to 3 major cities, but is mainly supplied to the outer suburbs in which there is no natural gas and is not likely to be for many years. Some communities rely a lot on this product for this reason. I currently employ 3 staff directly. Firewood merchants throughout these cities employ approximately 20-30 people because of my business.

My firewood has always been processed in Barham. We continually sponsor local community groups and support all local businesses especially for fuel, tyres and major repairs. These communities are already under excessive stress because of the ongoing drought. A reduction in timber allocations would be detrimental to these communities survival as they heavily rely on this industry. Sporting clubs (football and netball) would be non-existent if not for our support and should they be forced to close down, they would be lost forever.

I strongly believe management of these red gum forests is crucial to the ongoing survival and future of our environment. Yes, these forests are under stress because of the current drought and they must be managed to the current climate for their ultimate survival. We are currently facing the biggest drought of our time but we have also had droughts throughout our history (ie. Early 1900's), however, the climate has been changing for the past thousands of years. Many red gum trees that are currently under stress are growing because of the 1956 flood. Red gums began growing in areas where they usually had not grown.

The thinning process that is currently being undertaken is truly beneficial, as we have been carrying out this process for the last 3 years. These trees that have been thinned are downgrade red gum trees which are useful for only downgrade sawlogs and firewood. This process allows bigger, healthier trees to prosper greatly in this environment for future timber products (ie. Railway sleepers, bridge timber,

furniture timber and many other household products) and the ultimate survival of our forests for future generations.

For the past 150 years, the red gum industry has played a vital role in maintaining and managing red gum forests. It is my belief that there is a bigger stand of red gums now than compared to Australia's settlement. 200 years ago some of these areas were described as vast open woodlands. Ringbarking of trees in these areas has provided us with the forest we have today. Levee banks and water management has also encouraged forest growth. Later this year work will hopefully be underway to flood the Koondrook-Perricoota forest. The regeneration after this event will be enormous, but once again it must be managed. If this regeneration is not managed properly, fire would become a major threat. If the regrowth is not managed, for example, a day like Black Saturday would become catastrophic. This threat would count towards the majority of the red gum forests being wiped out.

My company cannot afford a reduction in allocations as I have invested significant amounts of money into machinery. Due to occupational health and safety regulations, keeping this machinery up to standards has incurred a huge debt to my company (\$1,250,000). My fleet of trucks used to transport red gum timber are all operating to current emissions standards of today. 18 months ago Bradley Campi and I purchased an additional firewood allocation when NSW Forestry Commission allowed licences to be transferred. We were of the understanding at the time that we had a cemented future in this industry. 20 years of investing into this industry would be lost if the gates were closed on the forest and leave my company with a considerable debt unable to be funded as a result. Obviously this would have an unrecoverable, detrimental impact on my company and my years of hard work, dedication and loyalty to this industry would be lost.

We trust you will make an informed decision based on the fact that our forest will be sustainable well into the future. Our forest and community stability is surely your priority. It's not only jobs, it's our forest. The last thing we want to see is a dying forest like Yanga Station near Balranald which was purchased by National Parks in 2006. If this forest was continued to be managed to our current climate, I'm sure it could have been saved from the state that it is in today.

Thank you for the opportunity of making a submission to this very important investigation.

Yours Faithfully,



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