

5/2/2010

To whom it may concern

I am writing to support the actions by other parties to the actions of the government of the day and the impositions forced upon farmers.

My name is Tudor Assenoff Ivanoff of

Approximately 18 years ago I purchased 518 acres of rural land. At the time approximately 250 acres had been previously cleared and was slowly regrowing into unusable bush / scrub land.

When I purchased the land I bought it under Torrens Title which I understood to be freehold land, meaning it was private property and that within reason I could do with it what I liked. I was told that I could clear the land within reason but not excessively. My intentions in purchasing this land was to retire and run a small herd of cattle and keep to myself. During this time I re cleared land that had already been cleared previously to allow grass to grow to feed my cattle. Whilst clearing these small areas (5 – 10 acres at a time) other areas that had been cleared by the previous owner regenerated.

Over the past 5 – 8 years with the severe droughts that has impacted on the western region of NSW, rising feed costs caused me to think of better strategies in using my land to feed my cattle and not drain my very small retirement holdings.

I decided to clear an area of approximately 10 acres to sow oats to use as feed for my cattle so as to not cost me out of my cash holdings which is minimal and quickly falling. I began clearing land which had previously been cleared prior to my ownership, but had significantly regenerated.

Last year representatives from the DECC came onto my land and began proceedings to restrict the usage of my land because according to them I had cleared too much land. I tried to explain to them that it had previously been cleared long before their department and the issues of climate change ever existed, but they insisted that I was wrong. They used satellite images to show me and when I said where were the images from 25 years ago to show what it used to be like they said it didn't matter.

I explained to them that in 18 years I had only semi cleared approximately 50 acres of bush land to allow grass to grow. The remaining 200 acres was previously cleared, so I was not clearing virgin bush land in these areas.

The representatives told me I could not accompany them whilst they walked around my property. I felt like I was being overtaken by government beurocrats. I felt intimidated by these people whilst on my property and there was nothing I could do about it.

After several exchanges of information I was directed to exclude approximately 6 acres of my land. I am not allowed to clear it, drive on it or use it for any purpose for 7 years. They told me it was because I had cleared too much land without permission and if I didn't comply I would be fined \$220000. I was not aware that I needed permission and the government never informed me that I needed permission. I am an elderly person of non English speaking background. I don't have mains power to my house, I don't have a computer and I watch little TV. If the government don't provide me with the information, how can they then come onto my land using technology to tell me I am in the wrong and fine me.

Being a simple man living a simple life I believe the government is using intimidation on

me because I do not fully understand what they have neglected to tell me. Since this interaction with the DECC I believe even they do not understand their own policies. I have received several letters contradicting the last one in relation to what is to be done to my excluded land.

First they tell me to fence off the excluded area, then only to use star pickets. They tell me that my cattle can graze the land then they tell me they can't. They tell me that the land is to regenerate and I can't touch it, but they tell me I have to kill all the weeds and non native vegetation but they will not pay for this and I don't have to do this on the rest of my property.

I believe the DECC has caused us unnecessary upset and confusion. It all seems to be so vague and it keeps changing. They use the excuse that it is because of climate change, but the whole of the world can't even agree that it is real and happening but the government believes it can change the world by telling me that I can't use 6 acres of my land and that I can't clear any more.

I am scared now to even cut down a dead tree that is dangerous in case I get fined. My day to day activities have been impacted by the big threat of a big fine. Next I will need permission to cut the grass to feed my cows. Where will it stop? The government keeps picking on the little battler instead of big business because it is easier. I don't have money to get legal representation to fight for me like big business does.

What is even more laughable is that the fine is worth more than the land and I make no income. If you fine me and take away my land you will have to provide me with a house to live in and a pension to survive at the cost to the government. It seems a bit silly to me like this whole situation.

Tudor Ivanoff