

## Retain Commonwealth Oversight of Assessment and determination of Development Applications

Committee Secretary,  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications,

Pre retirement I had upper middle management responsibilities to provide assessment and determination recommendations for land use change applications over almost half of NSW. Applications were largely, but not only, clearing of native vegetation. At different times I also had compliance responsibilities for the same part of NSW and occasionally for the entire State.

A large, perhaps majority, proportion of my colleagues at levels from local District Officers to Senior Executives were 'client captured' i.e. so immersed in the culture of the applicants that they deliberately or unintentionally acted on behalf of the applicant rather than the greater public good or society at large. Sometimes the answer must be NO.

Often Commonwealth intervention, or awareness that intervention was possible, was the only ameliorant reducing bad client captured determinations and encouraging compliance actions to inspect compliance with conditional consents and taken action where necessary.

My experience was repeated elsewhere in NSW and other States/Territories. The benefits of Commonwealth oversight at significant case level or at broader classes of applications or geographic levels was important regardless of Parties in power at State and Commonwealth levels and regardless of whether governments were from the same or different Parties.

Please retain Commonwealth involvement.

Doug Campbell