

## ENQUIRY INTO THE IMPACT OF CONSERVATION CONTROLS IMPOSED ON LANDHOLDERS

My name is Paul Fisher and I am a partner with Michael Boyce & Co, Chartered Accountants. I am based in Moree.

As ninety five percent of my clients are involved in Agriculture, I hear about the impact of the governments controls every day.

There are two issues I wish to raise - compensation and compulsion to restore.

Firstly, compensation.

In the Moree area, there can be up to \$300 difference in the value of land depending on whether it is suitable for growing of dryland crops or grazing. The difference in value mainly comes from the ability to clear and therefore grow crops.

Those farmers lucky enough to clear prior to the introduction of the imposition now have land worth \$300 - \$400 per acre while those who did not clear land now find themselves lucky to be able to sell for any price.

Those who can grow crops can make up to \$50 per acre, while those involved in livestock are lucky to break even. The Michael Boyce & Co Grazing and Wheat Comparative Analyses confirm these facts.

If the politicians and public of Australia want the right to tell landowners what to do with their land, they must be prepared to pay. Not only for the above difference, but for the difference in income that arises from the different land uses.

Secondly, compulsion to restore.

It makes some sense that there should be a decision made as to how much land should be allowed to be cleared on a per farm basis. This would place responsibility on the negligent farmers. Contrary to city opinion, there are very few farmers who are prepared to destroy their farm ecosystem for short term gain.

To the extent that an individual has cleared more than this amount so decided, that individual should be required to replant / restore the land to the specified percentage.

In this way, all landowners of Australia would at least be in the same boat.

There is no reasonable basis for allowing a landowner who has cleared land before the impost having a benefit over those that did not. This legislation would therefore be retrospective, but would be no more draconian than removing landholders rights to manage their land in the way that best suits their business.

I realise that the government has a lot of pressure brought to bear from vocal green groups, but if the system is not going to be fair as between landowners or paid for by the people who are imposing it, then the whole system of asset ownership becomes a farce.

Yours Sincerely

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