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28 September 2002

Mr Ian Dundas  
Committee Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage  
Parliament Houes  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Dundas

**Inquiry into Employment in the Environment Sector**

I am sorry I was unable to prepare a submission in time for your deadline of 30 August 2002.

In my view there is considerable potential for growth in the environment sector, particular in the fields of innovative technology for monitoring environmental quality, and technology for alternative (sustainable) energy production.

It would seem an attractive option to encourage small to medium enterprise, particularly in regional and rural Australia. One of the obstacles to SME growth in the region with which I am familiar (North Qld), a key limiting factor is the cost of access to bandwidth for "smart" industry.

A second obstacle to growth in this field is a lack of human capacity. We have relatively few people who are experienced in both technology (Sci, Tech & Eng.) and in business practices. We should place some emphasis on encouragement and support of knowledge brokers building links between our world class researchers and entrepreneurs.

In Townsville a consortium of business, government and scientists have produced a strategy for developing innovative technologies in the region at their own expense (Approx \$150,000), however we are now unable to progress until we can find new resources to build partnerships for affordable bandwidth, and recruit knowledge broker skills into the region.

I wish to bring these issues to the attention of the committee and would be happy to provide more information if it is of interest.

Yours sincerely

[signed copy in mail]

**Russell Reichelt**  
Chief Executive Officer

Secretary: *[Signature]*  
**RECEIVED**  
30 SEP 2002  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE