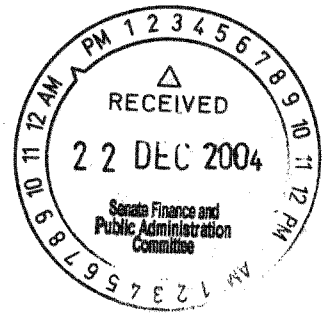


8th December 2004



Committee Secretary
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

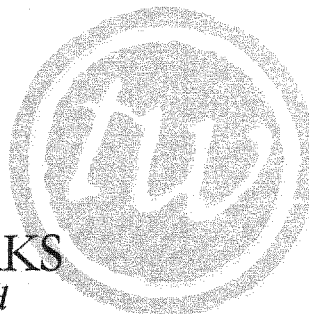
Dear Sir/Madam

Senate Inquiry – Sustainable Regions Program

I wish to make a submission to your Inquiry regarding the process of the Sustainable Regions Program on the Atherton Tablelands. ATSRC granted \$204,000 funding to an existing business, JAM Custom Kitchens and Furniture, to relocate 50 metres from me, in the same street, and establish a new workshop, showroom and residence in direct competition to my business. He plans to establish a “showroom and timber heritage display centre... will encourage local woodworkers, artists and high school students to display their work...” (Cairns Post, May 11th 2004)

Tolga, is a small town of 1500 people, 7 km from Atherton. I have established and personally financed a workshop, Gallery and Café and built a reputation for quality work and a commitment to excellence. The craftsmen in the workshop manufacture a range of attractive domestic items, collectable wall art, sculptures, carvings and delicate turnings in local native timbers. Classical and contemporary furniture, dining settings, entertainment cabinets, executive desks, bench seats, and numerous coffee tables are commissioned and sent interstate and overseas. The Gallery showcases the work of other local artisans working in wood, steel, ceramics, glass, silver and fabric. I employ nine permanent staff in the business.

TOLGA
WOODWORKS
Artisans in Wood



Kennedy Highway, Tolga. PO Box 92, Tolga. Qld 4882
Phone: 07 4095 4488 Facsimile: 07 4095 4589 Email: tolgawood@ledanet.com.au

With the JAM application, ATSRC did not follow the General Assessment Criteria guidelines. The project was not to compete directly with existing businesses, unless it can be shown there is a unsatisfied demand for product. Due diligence was not done, product differentiation was assessed by asking the proponent to comment, the findings of the Tourism Strategy were ignored, and an assessment of the impact on my business was not carried out. No one from the Committee or the Department ever contacted me. This was a "me too" attempt to capitalise on my successful woodworking enterprise, rather than an innovative tourism project.

I have copies media releases in local newspapers, letters to Minister John Anderson opposing this decision, the selection criteria and a transcript of a meeting held with committee members over this issue. I encourage the Committee to visit this area and I welcome the opportunity to provide further material for your investigation.

Yours faithfully



Trevor Allwood
Proprietor

Tolga

TOLGA WOODWORKS
SRM PROPOSAL ON
VACANT BLOCKS

