

Agriculture and Environment Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 2 May 2017 12:19 PM
To: Robert Hansen; David Pahlke
Subject: AEC MY SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE FOR 4TH MAY 2017 - A COUNCILLORS PERSPECTIVE CR DAVID PAHLKE IPSWICH

Categories: submission

Dear Committee,

I am not able to attend the hearing. I apologise for that.

I have been an elected Councillor since 1991. Firstly in the Moreton Shire Council, and then to the amalgamated Ipswich City in 1995. I am a Rural/Township Councillor in a City majority Council. I represent some 2/3rds of the City in area but only 1/10th of a 200,000 population. After 26 years I feel I can speak with some confidence and knowledge about rural issues. You need to hear a Councillors perspective, not just from the State and Council Officers. Councils are subordinate in all ways to the State. Local Govt is largely absent from the Constitution. State Legislation is enacted and Councils need to comply or enforce or interpret the processes that flow from any Act. So many times I see the State change process in their Act without realizing the flow on ramifications to Councils, or indeed how we are to implement it.

The single impost on Councils is the cost to Councils of compliance to an act - doing the State's job in getting the community to comply: eg also the Health - Buildings – Planning Acts. Yes we have our own Locals Law's but they are always subordinate to the State Legislation. The Bio Security Act is a really good example. With regards to this I wish deal specifically with declared weeds sector. I have dealt with hundreds of enquiries during my time as a rural councillor. I am aware the difficulty now in getting compliance to eradicate

The Changes to this Act has put additional onerous costs onto Councils. It is simply not as defined to enforce compliance. In 1991 I had some 900 Primary Producers under my guardianship. Now I have less than 500. Hobby Farmers and rural dwellers simply are not aware of the implications of Declared Weeds as in the past. Under the new process we need to practically hold the landowners hand all the way through the process. This adds costs/\$ to administer.

A scenario: - a 90 y.o. Farmer living on 100 acres, totally infested with fireweed. No monies no resources does not wish to do anything. Under the new Bio Security Act can we force him to do something and who pays? Old farmers would turn in their graves at what I see as the watering down of the compliance side of this. Under the old legislation with had some certainty to finalisation. Many of the invasive species have been downgraded. Unbelievable!!

Ipswich recently hosted a “surrounding council workshop”. We have now introduced subsidies to assist landowners. Yes council can under their Local Laws Give power to declare any species at a higher level - Is that True? How many councils actually do this?

The bottom line is that Ipswich is spending hundreds of Thousand Dollars to comply with State legislation with out any taxation revenue assistance from the state. It should all be partnership but this seems to more of you will do as we say type partnership and by the way, we are not sure how to do it. I beg you to listen to my Councils officer and indeed all Council staff on their feedback concerning the new legislation.

Cr David Pahlke Rosewood 

