

We operate two properties covering 21600ha in South West Queensland. Our operation involves grazing livestock and supports two families. We are totally reliant on the weather conditions and the bureaucratic decisions made by outside parties including Government for our existence and survival.

#### Fair and Equitable Legislation

I believe the role of our Legislators is to create rules and regulations which are fair and equitable to our community, particularly to those directly affected and to sustain a healthy balanced environment for future generations. Over the last 20 years since vegetation management laws were introduced we have seen amendment after amendment to these laws which has created uncertainty, stress, extra workload and expense to land holders. Our representative organisation Agforce has tried to work in partnership with Government to correct this problem but the powers that be seem to be more committed to a political result by submitting to the extreme views of minority groups. In most cases these groups are urban dwellers and have very little understanding or experience of what happens in rural Queensland. It is about time our elected leaders showed some leadership and worked with farmers to develop policies that are sustainable and fair.

#### Accuracy

With the technology that is available today it is difficult to understand why a note like this would appear on my most recent vegetation management map:

“Disclaimer. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this product, the Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy makes no representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability for any particular purpose and disclaims all responsibilities and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages, (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which you might incur as a result of the product being inaccurate or incomplete in any way and for any reason.”

#### Note

This is the map that I am expected to use when planning vegetation management activities on my property. This makes it very difficult to be totally accurate and it is very easy to see how mistakes can be made.

#### Self Assessable Codes

The introduction of the Self Assessable Codes was a tremendous help to land managers. We have used these to manage thinning on one of our properties. Notification of our thinning was provided to the Department and it is interesting to note that we were contacted shortly after the event by a DNR officer as a change in the vegetation cover had been detected on our property. This therefore shows that at present the Department has the capacity to monitor vegetation. Why is it necessary to change the legislation!!!!!!

One of our properties is essentially a Mulga block. We rely heavily on Mulga every year as a fodder species in dry times and it is a valuable resource that we have every intention of protecting for the future. The Self Assessable Codes have made it a much more user friendly process to utilize this valuable fodder source and ensuring our Mulga stands are protected for future use.

We are concerned that the process of having to apply for a harvesting permit will be a time consuming process. Our experience with events we have had to apply for at DNR have always

involved an extended time frame. It took 2 years to have our PMAV in place. What is the time frame going to be with the increase in work load in DNR offices. How many more staff are they going to engage. Mulga needs to be feed in a timely manner to maintain livestock condition and this is one of the reasons the Self Assessable codes are a superior option.

#### Plant Succession and Diversity

Running a machine across a paddock clearing vegetation does not automatically kill everything in the paddock. What it does is temporarily interrupt the natural plant succession process which is occurring in all paddocks all the time. If some form of management is not used our terminal vegetation will be a mature forest, which usually forms a monoculture. Mulga, in particular and cypress pine will form monocultures allowing very few other species to persist. The thinning operation interrupts this process and enables a diversity of plant species to establish and this has beneficial effects in providing valuable fodder for livestock and supports the survival of a large variety of wildlife. Plant and animal diversity is supposed to be what we are all seeking. We need to be concerned about ground cover which includes trees and grasses, not just be obsessed with planting or retaining trees which seems to be the obsession of environmental groups. Most farmers/graziers want to maintain their land to be sustainable for future generations. Regrowth management is an ongoing process, needing to be done every 7 to 8 years in our area, so there needs to be an efficient process to enable this to happen. Self Assessable Codes allow this.

Agriculture is a major contributor to our State economy by providing employment, support industries and businesses, food and fibre and necessary exports. The introduction of these laws displays a total lack of consideration and respect for the rural sector and most certainly will have a disastrous effect on rural businesses. Our business is a small family business and this is just another very poor decision that will make it more difficult for us to survive.

Doug and Sue Bryant