

**18 February 2013**

Mr John Hawkins

[jhawkins@acenet.com.au](mailto:jhawkins@acenet.com.au)

Dear Mr Hawkins,

Thank you for your email of today's date concerning your submission to the Legislative Council Select Committee on the Tasmanian Forests Agreement Bill 2012.

My information is that your submission was acknowledged in writing and also verbally by telephone conversation between yourself and the Committee Secretary, Mr Stuart Wright. I also understand that during that telephone conversation, Mr Wright did indicate to you that it was for the Committee, after deliberation, to determine who they would wish to call to provide additional verbal evidence beyond a received submission. This has always been the practice. I stress again that the matter of who a Select Committee wishes to invite to appear is a matter for the Committee only.

That is, decisions of the Committee are decisions of the majority of Members after deliberation and it is that majority who determine how the Committee will pursue its inquiry and conduct its business. A committee must at all times have regard to Standing Orders, Parliamentary Law, custom and practice.

As President I have no influence over who a Committee may wish to call to provide it with evidence beyond a received written submission.

Further, the practice governing Select Committees does not provide a forum for witnesses to ask questions of individual Members. It is for the Members of the Committee to ask questions of witnesses based solely and directly on the Committee's Terms of Reference as agreed by the Legislative Council. A Committee has no authority to act outside these Terms.

I trust my comments are of some value to you and I thank you for your email.

Yours sincerely,

**SUE SMITH MLC**

**President**