

Pulp mill opponents try to scale PM's 'firewall'

By Kate Hannon

What does it take to get the Prime Minister's attention these days?

After months of fruitless attempts to communicate concerns about Tasmania's proposed \$2 billion pulp mill, activists decided there was only one way to get through the "firewall" of minders. Write to Kevin Rudd in mandarin.

A letter written in classical mandarin calligraphy was sent by priority post to Mr Rudd on June 2 by Tasmanians Against the Pulp mill, or TAP as it is known.

Chief among its concerns was a warning to Mr Rudd not to ignore advice from outside his coterie, quoting a classical scholar Lu Jia who issued the same advice to his king.

The letter's opening quotation reads: "Incompetent aides shielding a good king are like clouds overcasting the sun and the moon."

TAP spokesman Bob McMahon said previous missives to Mr Rudd had been met with "bizarre forest industry propaganda".

Mr McMahon and his supporters want the Government to set up an independent review of the mill's approval processes which they say have ridden roughshod over environmental concerns.

In the English translation of



Bob McMahon



邪臣之蔽贤，犹浮云之翳日月也
“Incompetent aides shielding a good king are like clouds overcasting the sun and the moon”
“We represent a broad community in Tasmania who are deeply concerned about the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Tasmania. We are in grief that our voices and concerns have been ignored by the Tasmanian Premier and the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Art. As a group who supports the Prime Minister and its new government and directions, we understand our concerns may not have been brought to your attention as you are inundated with various issues.”



Prime Minister Kevin Rudd

the letter, Mr McMahon said Tasmanians were deeply concerned that the Government was hearing only one side of the story.

Last October, before the federal election both the

Tasmanian and Howard governments gave the green light to the development in the Tamar Valley, north of Launceston, provided it met 48 environmental conditions.

"Ignoring public voices and

proceeding regardless is like 'plugging one's ears while stealing a bell,'" TAP says in the letter.

"A spokesperson said the Rudd Government was "working cooperatively with Gunns, the

Independent Expert Group and the Tasmanian Government to ensure that the conditions of the approval are effectively implemented and provide the best possible environmental outcomes for Tasmania."

400 roos, wallabies to be culled in Tas

By Paul Carter

Four hundred kangaroos and wallabies will be shot dead in a cull on Maria Island National Park off Tasmania's east coast, the state's Parks and Wildlife Service says.

The service's manager of operations and performance, Mark Bryce, said yesterday that the 12-day animal management program would begin on Monday.

Eastern grey kangaroos, Bennett's wallabies and Pademelon wallabies would be targeted. "We follow the national code of practice for the humane shooting of these animals," Mr Bryce said. "We are looking at [shooting] 400 in total."

Mr Bryce said during the annual cull, which began in 1994, between 200 and 800 of the marsupials were shot each year depending on population figures on the island, 60km north-east of Hobart.

The cull happened because overpopulation caused malnutrition and disease among the animals.

The wild and rugged Maria Island is 20km long and 13km wide, and is a popular tourist destination. The entire island is a national park.

A controversial kangaroo cull at a Belconnen Department of Defence site ended earlier this month with 514 eastern grey kangaroos killed.

The Canberra cull drew international condemnation from animal rights activists, including former Beattie Sir Paul McCartney. More than 10 protesters were arrested.

The Canberra kangaroos were killed by lethal injection after being tranquillised by darts. In previous culls, they have been shot.

Mr Bryce said it was not practical to dispatch the Maria Island kangaroos and wallabies using that method.

"With euthanasia, you have to have vets to undertake that," he said.

"And Maria Island being a boat trip away off Tasmania, from a practical perspective, it's not the best way, and from an animal welfare position, it's not necessarily easier on the animals.

"It's debatable whether or not there are viable alternatives."

Mr Bryce said herding the marsupials into a corral panicked them, causing distress and injury.

The Australian Society for Kangaroos claims the way kangaroos and wallabies are culled on Maria Island is inhumane.

The society's Nikki Sutterby said yesterday joey were left alive in their mothers' pouch.

And, she claimed, the shot animals died from chest, body or limb wounds instead of being killed instantly.

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals says commercial killing practices are cruel and leave up to one million young motherless kangaroos to die of starvation each year.

Representatives of more than 50 animal welfare groups met federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett after this month's Canberra cull. They want the Government to introduce regulations to prevent female kangaroos and their joeys from being killed for meat or for population control.

The federal Environment Department set last year's national kangaroo culling quota at more than 3.5 million. AAP

Fresh Market Update

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Apprentice hurt in fall from roof

By Megan Doherty
City Reporter

An apprentice plumber fell 3.5m yesterday on to a concrete floor at a gym under construction in Tuggeranong, according to the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union.

CFMEU ACT branch assistant secretary Dean Hall said the 21-year-old fell about 11am while working on the roof of the new gym in Bartlett Place, Greenway.

An ACT Emergency Services Agency spokeswoman said a man suffering minor head injuries was taken by ambulance to the Canberra Hospital in a stable condition.

Mr Hall said the apprentice was installing a gas line to evaporative coolers when he fell. It

appeared the man had fallen through a penetration hole, which had later been covered.

He received first aid on site before being taken to hospital.

It is understood ACT WorkCover is investigating the incident, however, the agency was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Mr Hall said the gym owners, Sports Centre Management Australia, had agreed to conduct a full safety audit of the site.

"They've undertaken to address any safety concerns that have arisen and to take measures to prevent these things happening in the future," he said. "They've invited us on site to assist them."

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