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Director General
Tim Rollinson FICFor

24 March 2011

Dear Allan

FORESTRY COMMISSION REVIEWS

Thank you for your letter of 15 March asking that all SR10 and Business Unit changes cease until the Regulatory Task Force and the new Independent Panel on Forestry Policy in England have reported back to Ministers. As you are aware, the SR10 reduction in funding places significant pressures on the organisation and I am quite clear that we must proceed as planned. Unfortunately the pace and scale of the proposed changes are being dictated by the reduced level of funding but I accept there is still a level of uncertainty over the future of forestry in England. However, there is no uncertainty that we must meet our SR10 targets and to delay our planning, I believe, could be extremely damaging to both the organisation and staff, with a very high risk of failing to live within our financial settlement.

In terms of the SR10 proposals, we are currently at the planning and proposal stage and I do not believe that we will have taken any irreversible action by the time the Task Force and the Panel report. Our proposals and plans will remain flexible enough to allow for subsequent change should that be necessary.

The review of the Business Units is about looking for efficiencies and I am content for this to progress as planned.

In terms of future delivery, it is extremely doubtful that we will be able to continue to deliver the range and level of service that the public currently enjoy, and I accept that what we will provide in the future will be different to what we provide now. However, our aim is to continue to provide a professional, high quality service, albeit necessarily reduced in scale and scope.

I do appreciate you raising these concerns and I fully understand your position, but I give you my assurance that we are working hard to minimise the impacts on staff and the organisation and that we will remain flexible to any subsequent changes if and when they arise.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Rollinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tim Rollinson
Director General