

27th May 2011

Our Ref: T/FCTUGB/Reviews/SR10



To: Tim Rollinson,
Director General, Forestry Commission

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Cc: FCTU Chair
FCTU Departmental Committee

Dear Tim

SR10 IMPLEMENTATION

The Forestry Commission has put forward and presented much of cuts that need to be delivered as a result of the very severe cuts in the FC budget under SR10. I am writing to you again on behalf of the FCTU to urge you to reconsider the timing and the implementation of these cuts.

The Advisory Panel is still taking evidence, fact finding and forming an impression on the future role of the FC which will then inform the Government's policies for the PFE and the role of the FC in delivering them. It would only be sensible therefore to wait for the outcome of these deliberations and then set spending budgets based on the future resource requirements of the FC. In its role as advisor on forestry matters, the Forestry Commission surely has an obligation to inform both DEFRA officials and Ministers that the plan to cuts jobs and services from the Public Forest Estate is not advisable at this time? To proceed with cuts ahead of the review seems nonsensical.

The Public Forest Estate Report in 2009 demonstrated the public's desire to see a larger, properly funded, estate that is managed by the FC. From press reports (The Times 24 May attached) Bishop James has made it clear that this *could* be an outcome of his panel's review. The recent public campaign, and the current levels of activity around England, imply that the public are again willing to take action to prevent what they see as a calculated opportunity to reduce the size of FC and weaken its ability to deliver the services and benefits they have come to expect and depends on from the PFE.

The Commission has said that it is powerless to prevent the measures imposed by DEFRA: we urge you to try again to raise these points with Ministers and Senior Officials to prevent the Forestry Commission from being prematurely sacrificed before all the facts are known.

In the meantime, the FCTU will continue campaigning against job losses, privatisation of services and negative impacts on our members in restructuring proposals. However, we firmly believe that we can work with FC Management to complement your efforts to the long term benefit of the organisation and our members.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'A. J. MacKenzie'.

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The FCTU is a partnership of PCS, Unite, Prospect, GMB and the FDA.

Allan MacKenzie
FCTU Departmental
Trade Union Secretary