

**M** **Tasmanian Conservation Trust,**  
**Save Ralphs Bay Inc.,**  
**Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association**

**E** **GOVERNMENT CAN EXPECT BACKLASH IF IT FAILS TO APPOINT PERSON**  
**OF HIGHEST INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE TO HEAD RPDC**

**D** The debacle over Julian Green and Dr Warwick Raverty's resignations from the Resource Planning and Development Commission (RPDC) has thrown serious doubt over the integrity of the RPDC process not just for the pulp mill assessment, but for residents opposed to the destruction of the Ralphs Bay Conservation Area, and other community groups representing their concerns before the Commission.

**I** In a joint statement today, the Tasmanian Conservation Trust, Save Ralphs Bay Inc. and the Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association said the Lennon Government had corrupted the planning process by meddling in the work of the Commission, while at the same time assuring concerned communities to have faith in the 'independent umpire'.

**A** TCT Director, Craig Woodfield, said public faith in the independence and integrity of the process had been badly shaken.

"While the pulp mill assessment process has undoubtedly been seriously compromised, we must not forget that the integrity of the Commission's other work - which includes the inquiry into the placement of marine protected areas in the Bruny bioregion, the proposed canal estate at Ralphs Bay, the development of a new State Coastal Policy and the ongoing governance of local government planning schemes - is also now at risk.

**R** "It is absolutely critical that the Tasmanian Government move to address the real and perceived biases that are now entrenched in the communities view of the RPDC. We need an assurance that the appointment of a permanent replacement for Julian Green will be a transparent and thorough process, and that mechanisms are put in place to end the potential for government and industry interference in the work of the RPDC," Mr Woodfield said.

**E** SRB Inc communications' coordinator, Cassy O'Connor said before the PoSS vote last year, elected representatives from both houses who supported the PoSS reassured worried constituents the process was robust, independent and fair, and Julian Green a man of the highest integrity.

"Ironically, the strong professional and public service ethic of the outgoing RPDC executive commissioner has become even more evident in recent days. Julian Green was clearly fed up with having his position and the work of the Commission compromised by the Lennon Government. The Tasmanian people are entitled to ask, where does this government draw the line?

**L** "The RPDC has been tainted by a bullish government mindset to support - with taxpayers money - development at any cost. It has to stop, to ensure planning decisions in Tasmania are not the plaything of the political and corporate elite. The Lennon Government can expect the strongest possible community response if it fails to appoint a new executive commissioner who will guard the RPDC's independence while protecting public and environmental interests. We are watching to see the process is not further corrupted," Ms O'Connor said.

**E** The Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association is concerned smaller groups are losing their capacity to effectively advocate before the Commission due to the influence exerted by vested government and corporate interests.

**A** Chairman Julian Wolfhagen said, "This whole sorry situation puts democracy in Tasmania in the poorest possible light. Members of the Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association are deeply disturbed that the government and forest industry will prevail in planning decisions affecting our industry unless the independence of the process is openly and honestly restored.

**S** "How can we be expected to believe that community groups defending their livelihoods, environment and lifestyle will have a fair hearing when this government is so determined to trample over the process?," Mr Wolfhagen said.

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