

THIS IS A SHORT REPORT ON OUR MAIN ACTIVITIES DURING THE LAST 4 MONTHS.

AS PREVIOUSLY ADVISED WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF INVOLVING MORE VOLUNTEERS IN SHARING THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION'S ADMINISTRATION AND THE REVAMPING OF OUR WEBSITE. PARALLEL TO THIS WORK WE HAVE CONTINUED TO MONITOR FORESTRY TASMANIA'S 3 YEAR TIMBER HARVESTING PLANS FOR THE DERWENT AND HUON DISTRICTS.

WITH THE CREATION OF THE FOREST AGREEMENT RESERVES AND THE NEW WORLD HERITAGE AREAS, MORE THAN 50% OF THE ACCESSABLE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE AVAILABLE IN THE SOUTH OF TASMANIA HAS BEEN GIVEN PROTECTION FROM DESTRUCTION BY CLEARFELL TIMBER HARVESTING. THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO MAKE OUR WORK FOCUS ON A SMALLER AREA OF STATE FOREST AND THEREBY BE MORE EFFICIENT. SOME 60 BEEKEEPING SITES SUPPORTING IN EXCESS OF 1600 HIVES ARE PROTECTED BY THIS.

HOWEVER THIS PROTECTION IS NOW AT RISK OF BEING REMOVED BY THE ACTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND STATE GOVERNMENTS IN REVERSING THE NEWLY CREATED RESERVES . IF THIS OCCURS THIS ASSOCIATION WILL RECOMMENCE THE CLOSE MONITORING OF ALL TIMBER HARVESTING COUPES AS THEY ARE DISCLOSED. THIS DISCLOSURE PROCESS IS LENGTHY AND TIME CONSUMING BUT NECESSARY.

COUPLED WITH THE ABOVE WE HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN ASSISTING THE TASMANIAN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION TO BECOME INVOLVED IN FORESTRY TASMANIA'S FSC (FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL) ACCREDITATION PROCESS, AND THIS IS CONTINUING.

FORESTRY TASMANIA HAVE STATED THAT FCS ACCREDITATION IS CRITICAL TO THEIR BEING ABLE TO MARKET THE TIMBER HARVESTED FROM STATE FOREST. THE BEEKEEPERS HAVE , WITH OUR ENCOURAGEMENT, DECIDED THAT THEY MUST BE INVOLVED IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS AND WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THIS IS A ONCE AND ONLY CHANCE TO HAVE PERMANENT INPUT INTO LONG TERM TIMBER HARVESTING PRACTICES.

THIS INCLUDES RESEARCHING THE RULES AND PROCESS FOR THE TASMANIAN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION TO BE INVOLVED IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE (INCLUDING ATTENDING THE IMMINENT ON THE GROUND AUDIT INSPECTIONS), AND DRAFTING AND DRAWING SUBMISSIONS TO THE ASSESSOR APPOINTED BY FSC .

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN THE STATE FOREST WILL NO DOUBT BE TAKING THE SAME OR SIMILAR ACTION TO ENSURE THAT THEIR INTERESTS ARE PROTECTED. IT IS THEREFORE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT THE INTERESTS OF BEEKEEPERS ARE UNDERSTOOD AND TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AT ALL LEVELS OF THE PROCESS. OUR VOICE MUST BE HEARD AT LEAST AS LOUD AS THOSE OF OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.

OUR FOCUS IS NOW MUCH BROADER THAN JUST PRESERVING THE EXISTING STANDS OF MATURE LEATHERWOOD WHERE THEY EXIST IN TIMBER HARVESTING COUPES, ON A YEAR BY YEAR BASIS. IT NOW CONSISTS OF HAVING A COMMITTED INVOLVEMENT IN THE DRAWING UP OF THE RULES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF STATE FORESTS THROUGH THE FSC REQUIREMENTS, THESE REQUIREMENTS INCLUDING FORESTRY TASMANIA MANAGING THE FOREST SUSTAINABLY ON A PERMANENT BASIS. THIS MUST INCLUDE MAXIMISING THE BEEKEEPER'S ACCESS TO, AND THE PROTECTION OF THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE INTO THE LONG TERM FUTURE.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE FSC APPLICATION PROCESS BY FORESTRY TASMANIA COULD TAKE AT LEAST 2 YEARS .

THIS IS GOING TO BE A VERY BUSY 2 YEARS FOR THE ASSOCIATION.

AT THIS TIME, WHEN FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, THE BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A SAY IN THE LONG TERM MANAGEMENT OF STATE FOREST, YOUR SUPPORT IS CRITICAL TO ENABLE THE ASSOCIATION TO USE ALL OF ITS RESOURCES TO HELP MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

THE ASSOCIATION`S EXECUTIVE THANKS YOU FOR THAT SUPPORT.

BOB DAVEY (PRESIDENT).