



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

FORESTRY PLANTATIONS SALE A COMPLETE DEBACLE

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has labelled the proposed sale of the state owned Forestry Plantations Queensland as a “complete debacle”, following revelations government owned land would be sold off after the Bligh Labor Government said it wouldn’t and that private landowners with current FPQ contracts would be disadvantaged.

Mr Cripps said the Bligh Labor Government had been caught out once again blatantly misleading the people of Queensland, when it was revealed by the LNP Opposition in the Queensland Parliament last week that land owned by the State Government’s forestry business will be sold off, despite previous denials that this would occur.

“The Bligh Labor Government spent millions of dollars of tax payers’ money printing and distributing the so – called “Myths Vs Facts” flyer around the state. That item of propaganda claimed that only the plantation trees and not the land owned by FPQ would be sold. However, the LNP Opposition has revealed that this is not the case” said Mr Cripps.

“Approximately 33,000 hectares of state owned freehold land will be included when Forestry Plantations Queensland is sold within the next few months. That is a very significant amount of land with freehold rights attached to it. The real possibility is there for the land to be used for other purposes. The Bligh Labor Government can not be trusted” he said.

Mr Cripps said during the debate on a revenue bill and a natural resources bill in the Queensland Parliament last week, he had argued that private landowners with existing hardwood plantation agreements with Forestry Plantations Queensland were being disadvantaged as a result of a clause that legislated certain contractual rights away.

“Where a landowner has an existing agreement with FPQ, they have done that on the basis that FPQ is the other partner in that contract and FPQ is a state government owned entity. There is a certain amount of security involved in that agreement. Now the landowner faces the prospect of being party to a contract with a different entity” said Mr Cripps.

“In ordinary circumstances, a landowner would have the right to object to a change in ownership. Landowners with a contract with FPQ had such a contractual right until last week when the Bligh Labor Government moved to legislate those rights away. They will no longer have those rights after FPQ is sold and that is a concern for them” he said.

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