

Mumbulla State Forest - Roads Vandalism

The following transcript and accompanying photos were emailed by Timber Communities Australia member Peter Rutherford on 24 May 2010 to various media outlets. No mention of Peter's letter or photos had been made by 28 May yet the media outlets continue to sensationalise the anti-timber activism in Mumbulla State Forests. While local media outlets mention log trucks "using roads used by school buses" all have failed to mention that logging roads have been rendered impassable.

The photos do not lie- they all show the severe health and safety risks posed to timber workers and members of the public by the actions of unknown persons.

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Sent: Monday, 24 May 2010 1:46 PM

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Subject: School Buses and Dr George Mountain Road

Good Afternoon.

In recent days, there has been some discussion in the media about the interaction between log trucks and a local school bus on Dr George Mountain Road.

As you may be aware, on Monday of last week, three activists locked on to harvesting equipment in Compartment 2133 in Mumbulla State Forests to mark 49 days of continuous protest.

This protest has had several facets.

1. Cars and people had been blocking access to the harvest site on both Clarkes and Mumbulla Creek Roads. These people refused any request by Forest NSW and forest operators to clear the way.
Police have had to attend almost every day to ask the protestors to clear the access. Workers, including truck drivers have been held up for typically 1 to 3 hours.
2. In recent weeks, cars have been kept clear of the road pavement following police warnings and groups of people have blocked the road.
3. Over the past three weeks, an increasing amount of debris, including rocks and logs, has been placed on the Clarkes Road to impede workers and trucks using this road. Initially access was maintained by hand clearing the debris. During times when Clarkes Road has been blocked, log trucks have used the secondary access route along Mumbulla Creek Road. This has caused inconvenience and concern to residents who live along that road and some parents of children using the school bus.
4. On Tuesday 18 May, four tip truck loads of debris were removed from Clarkes to restore log truck access. Over the following days, more debris has been placed on both Clarkes and Mumbulla Creek Roads. While Mumbulla Creek Road has been cleared by hand this morning, a machine will have to be brought in to again clear Clarkes Road.

The school bus operator has been contacted by the log haulage contractor has been contacted to advise that log trucks will again need to use Dr George Mountain Road.

Anyone paid on piece rates, would understand the financial and other impacts that the daily stoppages are having on the workers, their families and their employers. Despite the duress and aggravation, or this sustained "direct action," all the

workers have maintained their composure, which is more than can be said for some of the local activists at recent public meetings.

The impact of these road blockages on any local residents, tourists or emergency vehicles that may use the affected roads is unclear.

Photos of just a small fraction of the debris facing workers this morning are attached.

Any activists who have issues with the log trucks using Dr George Mountain Road should think very carefully about any action they have taken to force this outcome.

In addition to the access issues, over the past 2 weeks, glue has been placed in the locks of the doors on the machines on one occasion and on 2 nights, machine windows have been painted.

Please call me on 02 6496 0222 or the Cocks Group of Companies if you want more details.

Peter Rutherford
Forestry Manager

