

**TO: The Chairman
Natural Resources and Infrastructure Committee**

RE: Report on the Alienation of Rural Land

The Natural Resource Management Standing Committee established a Working Group of agency representatives to examine and report on the alienation of rural land. The Working Group has completed its assignment and Standing Committee now forward the report to the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Committee together with recommendations for further action.

The continuing alienation of rural land is a significant issue particularly in areas adjacent to metropolitan Adelaide and around Mount Gambier. The maintenance of rural land use on prime land is essential to securing the opportunity for ecologically sustainable agricultural development. The problem of rural land alienation lies behind the application of land division and land use controls over prime agricultural land in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

The Working Group have made the following observations in presenting the report to Standing Committee:

- a lack of standardised terminology across Council areas makes information on rural land difficult to gather and interpret;
- rural land use planning, through a lack of skilled practitioners and knowledge of the existing patterns of and influences on rural land use, is poorly developed;
- land zoned for agricultural use is rapidly being fragmented despite planning controls; and
- "Right to Farm" legislation is not seen as an appropriate approach for South Australia.

The Working Group has recommended a strengthening of the rural land use planning system through greater knowledge of the capability of agricultural land, improved land use policies for rural areas, more effective monitoring of the change of rural land uses to other forms of land use and an improved skill base for rural land use planning.

In considering the Working Groups report the Standing Committee was aware that the understanding of this issue in the community generally and amongst local government authorities in particular is poorly developed. With that in mind the Standing Committee resolved to recommend the following course of action:

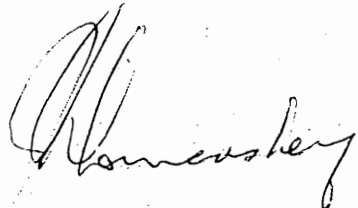
- the public release and wide distribution of the Working Group's report;

- the referral of the Working Group's report to the Planning Review with a request that in devising the new strategic and legal framework for land use planning in South Australia that particular regard be given to ways of minimising the alienation of primary agricultural land;
- that a public conference/seminar be convened in February/March, 1992 with invitations to speak sent to the Local Government Association and the United Farmers and Stockowners; and
- that further advice on appropriate action be forwarded to Cabinet in conjunction with the Planning Review following that public conference/seminar.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Committee of Cabinet endorse:

- the public release and wide distribution of the Working Group's report;
- the referral of the Working Group's report to the Planning Review;
- the convening of a public conference/seminar with invitation to key speakers from the Local Government Association and the United Farmers and Stockowners; and
- the presentation of further advice to Cabinet following the public conference/seminar.



for
Dennis Mutton
Chairman
Natural Resources Management Standing Committee

7/11/91