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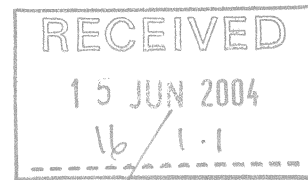
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TO: CHAIRMAN INQUIRY INTO MURRUMBIDGEE COLLEGE OF Ag.

FAX NO: 02 92303416

FROM: JOHN HODGENS

DATE: 13-6-04



ATTENTION: MR IAN COHEN (CHAIRMAN.)

2 pages including this page.

SIR,

THE FOLLOWING PAGE IS MY SUBMISSION ON
THE INQUIRY INTO THE MURRUMBIDGEE COLLEGE OF
AGRICULTURE.

THIS SUBMISSION WAS "emailed" TO gpsecnos @
parliament.gov.au ON THE PM OF FRIDAY 11 JUNE, IT
"BOUNCED" AND WAS SENT AGAIN SATURDAY AM 12 JUNE
AGAIN IT "BOUNCED", HENCE THIS FAX COPY.

YOURS SINCERELY

"Farnham"
Fernhill Rd
Inverell 2360

10 June 2004

Mr Ian Cohen MLC
Chair
Inquiry into Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture
Parliament House
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Cohen

**Re: Inquiry into Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture
General Purpose Standing Committee No 5**

Item 1 (d)

Having been involved in Agriculture for over forty years, I wish to support the retention of The Tocal Agricultural College in its present form, under the domain of the Ministry for Primary Industries. Ten years ago, both sides of politics in NSW agreed that the interests of the College and its clientele were best served by its operation under the then Ministry for Agriculture.

No evidence has been forthcoming to my knowledge to make a major change.

I believe it is vital to preserve the important and specific role Tocal is playing in agriculture, the environment and rural NSW. Their delivery of courses, and course content, has gained national and international reputation. The College curriculum has over the years been at the forefront of the changing agricultural environment and its record of student employment has been above 95% for many years.

I believe no other College in Australia offers an external Diploma of Conservation and Land Management. Tocal is also at the forefront of Property Management Planning education, vital for sustainable agriculture.

I believe the Dept of Education and Training does not have, and does not intend to have, any residential facilities available on campus and any suggestion that "home stay" for students would be totally inappropriate. With the Department's current restructuring, and the resulting reduction in teaching staff, how could they be taking on a new faculty?

It is essential that Agriculture be more highly valued in the community in order to produce the highest nutritional quality food for the health of our nation and to simultaneously encourage best land management practices. This I believe is part of the ethos of the CB Alexander Agriculture College, Tocal, and must at all costs be retained. The Ministry of Primary Industries is best placed to oversee such an important issue.

I strongly oppose any alterations to the College's management and operation as I believe it would be detrimental to students, employers and Agriculture in general.

I therefore most vigorously seek that the administrative arrangements for Tocal continue in their present form. I also seek that a copy of this letter be provided to each of the Committee members of this inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

John Hodgens

