

PO Box 108
Mt. Larcom Qld 4695

11 FEB 2005

DATE RECEIVED

3537

Mr Ralph Donnet
Queensland Competition Authority
GPO Box 2257
Brisbane Qld 4001

Dear Mr Donnet,

I run one of the few remaining businesses in Mt. Larcom. We bought the rundown lease nine years ago and have worked 100+ hours a week ever since building up the business to the point of making a reasonable living. Last year we had the opportunity to buy the building so we mortgaged our house and jumped in boots and all. We have just had the quietest Holiday season ever and now this.

As hygiene is essential in the food industry, water consumption is high, but at the prices you are suggesting it would almost make the business unviable. We employ a part time staff of five young people who would not be able to stay in Mt. Larcom if their work hours had to be cut.

The high water rate will also affect the possibility of selling our business in the future. Would you buy a business if you had to pay \$3,000 to \$4,000 just for water? I think not.

I realize that price rises are inevitable but can we get a little realistic please. Mt. Larcom has a large pensioner population (many widows) who now have to seriously look at whether they can stay in their houses or sell (for next to nothing, thanks to water prices) and move into retirement homes away from here.

Do you realize Mt. Larcom home prices are very low? We are caught between a rock and a hard place, can't afford to stay here but can't afford to sell and buy anywhere else. In your calculations do you factor in the personal costs the psychological costs or is it all just the bottom line.

Respectfully yours,

K. S. Willcocks

Mrs Karen Willcocks
Owner/Manager
Mt. Larcom Cafe

Ralph Donnet

From: Karen Willcock [karen@dreamtilt.com.au]
Sent: Saturday, 22 January 2005 5:35 PM
To: Water Investigation
Subject: Gladstone Area Water Board: 2004 Investigation of Pricing Practices

PO Box 108
Mt. Larcom Qld 4695

22 January 2005

Mr Ralph Donnet
Queensland Competition Authority
GPO Box 2257
Brisbane Qld 4001

Dear Mr Donnet,

I believe all of the water rates should be shared equally among the shires. For instance if a power transformer blows up in Mt. Larcom everybody wears the bill whether in Gladstone, Calliope or Boyne so why isn't it the same with water. Why do Aldoga, Comalco ect get a cheaper water rate than Mt. Larcom. We will have to wear their pollution, why can't they wear some of our water costs. I do believe QCL paid for the water main from Yarwun and it's maintenance so why are we being charged for it.

I would like to know what has caused this sudden huge increase in water costs. If I put my prices up by this percentage the ACCC would be all over me. In my café in order to keep up with Council health regulations I need to use large amounts of water. The increased costs will cripple my business. These huge increases in water charges will ultimately shut my town down. Is this what you want? What ever happened to CPI + 5%? Let's get realistic. All I ask is for a fair deal.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs Carl Willcocks
Owner/Manager
Mt. Larcom Cafe

24/01/2005