



14th May 2010

Adam Menary
My Environment
Via email

Re: Altercation with log truck driver adjacent logging on Bicentennial Trail

Dear Adam,

I am writing to share with you the details of an unfortunate incident that happened to myself and ten others in my vehicle on a road in the Toolangi forests recently.

On Wednesday, April 28th, 2010, I was driving a twelve seater van taking ten people on a tour of the forests of the Central Highlands of Victoria. The purpose of the tour was to show members of the Victorian parliament and their advisors around a number of areas of forest subject to controversial clearfell logging by VicForests.

On the Monda Trail, adjacent the Bicentennial Trail, we were slowing descending down a hill past an active logging coupe. We were following your vehicle, as you, as locals to the area, were guiding us to locations of particular concern. At the bottom of this hill, a large logging truck loaded with logs was stopped on the side of the road. You slowly descended and passed the truck and we were following. After you had passed the truck, the truck accelerated up the hill directly towards our vehicle. Had I not quickly braked and reversed rapidly up the hill, in my view, that the truck would have probably collided with my vehicle. The truck came within about two metres of the front of my vehicle and persisted in pushing us back up the hill to a point where I could move to the side of the road.

As the truck finally passed, its driver stopped and demanded I wind down the window. I did this, and said hello. He then aggressively asked "Where do we live and where are we going?" I said we live in various places and we are on our way home. He was quite angry and said that we had no right to be on this road, and that there was a sign saying so. I then told him to politely "Take care" and he then wound his window down and again aggressively said "What did you say to me?" His manner was aggressive and in no way were his actions safe. Many of the passengers on board were obviously afraid and unnerved by the actions of the truck driver, and thanked me for my safe driving. They also asked why the driver asked us where we lived and what business was this of his.

The only sign behind us was a sign off to the side indicating "Road Closed". If this sign was for Monda Track, it certainly was not clear, and none of the twelve people in our vehicle had thought it applied to this road.

Regardless of the road closure, this was on the Bicentennial Trail, and it is absurd that such an historic trail should be logged and closed off to the public.

It is my view that my vehicle was in clear view of the truck before it started up the hill. The truck driver drove in an aggressive manner, and had I not backed up the hill at speed on a slippery road, there could have been a serious accident.

This behaviour is absolutely unacceptable. The purpose of this letter is to put on the record what happened to us at the hands of an aggressive log truck driver. Please share this experience with anyone you think may be interested in the safety of the public on roads which are used by logging trucks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Chamberlain', written in a cursive style.

Luke Chamberlain
Victorian Forest Campaigner
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