

4th December, 2003

RE: Review into Rentals for Waterfront Tenancies on Crown Land in NSW

I have lived at this address overlooking Tambourine Bay on the Lane Cove River for over 30 years and have been involved in boating activities on the bay for the whole of that time. During my life here I have observed the contribution to our community of club ramps on the bay, of which there are three. They involve a scout club; a shared facility by a university and a girl's school; and a boy's school. This contribution has been in the form of training and development of school and tertiary students. Coaching is mostly by volunteers because of cost.

I believe that if the proposed Waterways rental pricing policy is implemented, all of the youth training activities in our bay will slowly but most certainly be priced off the water. The three modest clubhouse and deck and ramp facilities for rowing and sailing do not impinge adversely on the Tambourine Bay, but rather they add to the variety and interest of the foreshore.

No-one loses by this use of the public foreshore. Instead young Sydneysiders learn self reliance, sailing and rowing skills and team work from these activities. Market rents, in any area of Sydney's foreshores, would kill most of these activities. The results cannot be measured in dollars. My wife and I, as members of the public having bought into these areas when they were inexpensive, strongly support such use of the foreshores, and accept that they are a proper use of public land. Such usage has been a part of Sydney since its development as a town.

I am also surprised that boat pens and jetties should be considered for rental returns to reflect their market value. These wetland leases are for only three years...yet the outlay of money to build these must be great...far too heavy an outlay to be amortised within a three year period. Nor can they be transferred, and apparently they cannot be leased to anyone else. They may have to be removed at the cost to the owner. Somehow the Government has got these leases fearfully wrong. The mere fact that the rent has not followed the CPI, and now there is the possibility of a huge multiplier confirms severe mismanagement by Waterways.

This seems to me to be a clear case of the government, in an inept and basically unjust way, trying to squeeze more money out of what it clearly considers a particularly wealthy class of house owner. Yet many of us who bought many years ago and have lived in homes near the water have seen the value of our homes grow, but often with an increase in rates and thus an impact on our incomes. Are we to be forced out of our family homes? As an old Labor supporter in my seventies, now trying to live on my own savings, I am in total disagreement with this attempt.

Yours faithfully,

Frank H. Talbot