

# Department of Health and Human Services

POPULATION HEALTH - PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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File:

Clive M. Stott  
9 Alpine Crescent  
GRINDLEWALD TAS 7277

Dear Mr Stott

## Smoke Inhalation – Planned Burning

Thank you for your email and letter dated 10 and 23 October 2008 respectively, in which you seek clarification of the responsibility of smoke management and its public health impacts. Please accept my apologies for not replying to you earlier.

You note that the Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) has stated to you that "the issues you are concerned with are the responsibility of public health authorities". This appears to conflict with the advice I have previously provided to you that the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) does not have regulatory control for planned burning and smoke management.

DHHS has a "responsibility" for public health in the same general way that TFS has "responsibility" for fires. The TFS statement should not be interpreted as DHHS having regulatory responsibility for planned burning. I am sure this was not the TFS's intention in the brief statement that was sent to you.

DHHS also has a general responsibility to provide health advice into proposed policies and legislation that may have effects on public health. To that end, DHHS is currently participating in a multi-agency Smoke Management Working Group (SMWG).

The SMWG has been set up to review the implementation and effectiveness of the 2008 interim fire management/smoke dispersal guidelines, and to provide advice to the Forest Practices Advisory Council (FPAC). It is envisaged that the SMWG will continue to meet until such time as the report to the FPAC has been finalised.

I trust this satisfies your enquiry.

Yours sincerely



Dr Roscoe Taylor  
**Director of Public Health**

19 November 2008